















Albany, N. Y. Dudley observatory

THE

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DUDLEY OBSERVATORY

AND THE

SCIENTIFIC COUNCIL.

STATEMENT OF THE TRUSTEES.



ALBANY:

VAN BENTHUYSEN, PRINTER, 407 BROADWAY  
1858.

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# STATEMENT

## OF THE

### TRUSTEES OF THE DUDLEY OBSERVATORY.

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Recent events in the history of the Dudley Observatory, seem to require that the Trustees of that Institution should present to the public a statement of facts, relating to the difficulties which have, for a few weeks, occupied so much attention.

The project of establishing an Astronomical Observatory in the city of Albany, was first suggested by Doctor J. H. Armsby, in the winter of 1851. His views were submitted to several prominent citizens, some of whom encouraged, while more discountenanced the suggestion. Thomas W. Olcott, was the first to promise aid and support to the enterprise.

In June, 1851, Professor Amos Dean wrote to Professor Mitchell, of Cincinnati, asking his advice and co-operation.

Professor Mitchell's reply, dated July 28th, 1851, was replete with wise counsel and encouragement. It constituted, in fact, the foundation upon which subsequent proceedings were based.



In his letter, he says :

“ Twenty-five thousand dollars, for building and instruments, would be sufficient to realize, at the beginning, my views of the matter, and to lay the ground-work upon which immediate *action* and consequent success, could be based.”

At a social gathering, at the house of Doctor Armsby, on the evening of July 3d, 1851, Professor Mitchell's letter was read. Among those present, were, the Hon. Washington Hunt, then Governor of the State, Thomas W. Olcott, Judge Harris, Doctor March, Judge Parker, Professor Dean, E. P. Prentice, and William H. De Witt. Professor Agassiz made an eloquent address in reference to the establishment of a University in this city, of which the Astronomical Observatory was to be an organic department.

Soon after this meeting, Dr. Armsby commenced circulating a subscription for the endowment of the Observatory. Mr. Olcott was the first to subscribe. He was followed by Messrs. De Witt, Prentice, and others. In August, 1851, Prof. Mitchell, while attending a meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, held in this city, selected the site now occupied by the Observatory.

Gen. Van Rensselaer, who owned the land, generously agreed to give, and subsequently conveyed to the Trustees, about seven acres of land for this purpose. It is gratifying to the Trustees to know that in this instance, as in others, giving did not impoverish the donor. His adjacent lands have been greatly enhanced in value. Very considerable sales have been made, at

prices greatly exceeding those at which the land had been held before the location of the Observatory.

At this time, the project received some slight check, from the discouragement of Messrs. Bache, Pierce and Henry; who, at a meeting at the Mechanics' and Farmers' Bank, advised against the enterprise. Possibly, the fact that it was being prosecuted under the auspices of Prof. Mitchell, had some influence upon the views of these distinguished gentlemen, at that time.

In September 1851, Mr. Olcott procured from Mrs. Dudley a subscription of ten thousand dollars, with the understanding that an act of incorporation should be obtained, and that the Institution should be named the Dudley Observatory.

A few weeks later, through the instrumentality of John B. Tibbitts, Esq., of Troy, Mrs. Dudley gave three thousand dollars more. These generous donations were bestowed at least four years before Mrs. Dudley, or the Trustees, had contemplated the connection of any scientific gentleman with the Observatory, except Prof. Mitchell.

In March 1852, the total of subscriptions having reached the sum of twenty-five thousand dollars, the Legislature of the State of New-York, passed the following act of incorporation :

AN ACT to incorporate the Dudley Observatory, of the city of Albany.

*The People of the State of New-York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:*

SECTION 1. Thomas W. Olcott, William H. De Witt, Ezra P. Prentice, Alden March, Joel Rathbone, Robert H. Pruyn, John

B. Tibbitts, Ormsby M. Mitchell, Samuel H. Ransom, Gilbert C. Davidson, James H. Armsby, John N. Wilder, Isaac W. Vosburgh, Eliphalet Wickes, Stephen Van Rensselaer, and such others as they may associate with themselves, are hereby constituted a body corporate and politic forever, by the name and style of "The Dudley Observatory, of the city of Albany," for the purpose of establishing and maintaining an Astronomical Observatory, in the city of Albany, and by that name they and their successors and associates shall be capable of taking, by purchase or otherwise, holding, conveying, or otherwise disposing of any real or personal estate, for the purposes of this incorporation, which estate shall not at any time exceed the net annual income of ten thousand dollars.

§ 2. The persons above named shall be trustees of the said corporation, and shall have power to fill any vacancies which may occur in their number, and shall have power to make such by-laws as may be necessary, and not contrary to law, relative to the management and disposition of the estate and concerns of said corporation, and to appoint such officers and servants as they may deem necessary.

§ 3. The said corporation shall be subject to the general provisions and liabilities, contained in the third title, of the eighteenth chapter, of the first part of the Revised Statutes.

The plan for the Observatory building was made in the winter of 1853, at Cincinnati, under the immediate direction of Prof. Mitchell, who, as it was then understood, was to take charge of the Observatory. In pursuance of this plan, a building was erected in 1853, and 1854. Prof. Geo. R. Perkins superintended its construction.

In the early part of the year 1855, the progress of the enterprise was checked by the temporary inability of Prof. Mitchell to remove to Albany, by reason of some important business engagements in which he was concerned. The Trustees, however, continued to receive assurances from that distinguished Astronomer, that, as soon as these engagements should be fulfilled, he would at once devote himself to the interests and objects of the Observatory.

At the Providence meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, in August, 1855, the utility of a Heliometer was discussed. By means of this instrument, certain astronomical measurements can be performed with greater accuracy, than by any other instrument at present known to science. These measurements were much desired by the Coast Survey, for the determination of the position of certain stars of the Pleiades; and the use of the Heliometer, for that purpose, had been first suggested to, and urged upon Professor Pierce, by Dr. C. H. F. Peters, then employed by the Coast Survey, on a work upon the Pleiades occultations.

During the Providence meeting, Prof. Bache informed a Trustee of the Observatory, of the wants of the Coast Survey, and of the fact, that, as an act of Congress prohibited that body from establishing a fixed Observatory, they were not authorised to use the money necessary to procure a fixed Observatory instrument. He then proposed that the citizens of Albany should furnish the means to purchase a Heliometer, and he, as Superintendent of the Coast Survey, and in consideration of the advantage he should derive from the use of that instrument, would supply a Transit instrument and observers, from his corps of United States employees, free of expense to the Institution.

Dr. Gould, in his speech at the Inauguration of the Observatory, referring to this interview, says: "This was enough for Doctor Armsby. He saw in it a means of usefulness for the Dudley Observatory, and he guar-

anteed, *upon his own responsibility*, that Albany would provide one."

Immediately after making this pledge, Dr. Armsby sought Professor Mitchell, then present at the Association meeting, and after informing him what he had done, enquired if it met his approval. His reply was worthy the disinterested and earnest devotee of science. He admitted that his personal feelings would incline him to wish, that the Observatory might remain inactive until his business engagements would enable him to carry out his original plans. But he expressed his readiness to yield his preference, for the cause of science, and to give his acquiescence to a proposal, which, if carried out in good faith, promised to put the Observatory at once into working order, and to secure immediate practical results. Thus commenced the first connexion between the United States Coast Survey, and the Dudley Observatory.

Dr. Armsby returned to Albany, and laid the plan before Mr. Olcott, at whose solicitation Mrs. Dudley promptly and cheerfully agreed to advance six thousand dollars, for the purpose of executing the arrangement.

Intelligence of this fact was conveyed at once to Professor Bache, then present at the anniversary meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Education, held in New York, immediately after the Providence meeting. It was hailed with joy by Prof. Bache and Pierce, the latter of whom then proposed that an advisory council, consisting of gentlemen of



scientific attainments, should be associated with the Board of Trustees. Being requested to mention the names he would propose for this council, he wrote the following: Professors Bache, Pierce, Gould, and Commander Davis. A few days afterwards, on the occasion of the informal appointment of the Scientific Council, Dr. Gould stated that he was not on friendly terms with Commander Davis. His name was, therefore, stricken from the list, and that of Professor Henry substituted. The name of the late Dr. Beck was also added, at the same time. Thus originated the now famous *Scientific Council*.

About the same time, in order that the Heliometer might be the largest and best instrument of its kind in the world, Mrs. Dudley, at the solicitation of Mr. Olcott, as before, increased her subscription to \$14,000.

Mr. Olcott also authorised the purchase of a Meridian Circle, to cost \$5,000, and Professor Bache authorised the purchase of a Transit instrument, for use in the Observatory, to be paid for by the Coast Survey, at a cost of \$1,500.

The Hon. Erastus Corning also authorised the purchase of a Normal Clock, to cost \$1,000, and Dr. Gould offered to go to Europe, for the purpose of securing these important instruments. The proposal was accepted, and Dr. Gould started for Europe, the last of September, 1855, with full authority to purchase a

Heliometer, a Meridian Circle, a Transit instrument, a Normal Clock, and such other instruments as he might think proper. He was furnished with an ample letter of credit, for his personal expenses, and to enable him to make the necessary advances on the instruments. The importance of immediate action, in the opinion of the Board, justified the additional expense necessarily attendant upon a hurried expedition; especially as Dr. Gould's positive assurances and promises induced them to believe that, by his personal exertions, the instruments could all be landed in Albany before the first day of August, 1856, so as to be in use at the Inauguration of the Observatory.

Dr. Gould, while in Europe, contracted for a Meridian Circle, Transit instrument, and Clock. These contracts, as well as his letters to the Trustees, seemed to vindicate the latter in the expense they had incurred in sending him to Europe, and to justify the hopes he had encouraged. He wrote from Berlin, on the 23d of October, 1855, as follows:

“What Le Verrier pronounced impossible, Martins (the maker) has promised, namely: that the instrument (the Meridian Circle) shall be completed by the first of July, 1856, and in America, all going well on the passage, by the first of August.”

Under date of October the 24th, he informed the Trustees that he had made a similar contract, with the same makers, for the Transit instrument.

On the 5th of November, 1855, Dr. Gould wrote from Gotha, Germany, the following gratifying information respecting the clock:

“In Altona I have contracted for the Normal Clock, presented by Mr. Corning, and here the changes will be very great. The clock case is to be of metal, except the front, which is to be of glass; the whole is to be air-tight, and a compensation for barometric changes introduced. It is one of the simplest things in the world, and seems so strange that it was not thought of before. As the clock is to be sheltered as much as possible from changes of temperature, and no loud sound will be necessary for the beat, great delicacy seems attainable; and the maker, M. Krille, has already stopped work on everything else, to devote all the energies of all his workmen to this one object. The clock is to be adjusted, regulated, set in motion, stopped and wound by apparatus from the outside. Krille is quite as earnest and enthusiastic about it as I am. He means to do something that will make his name long remembered. *The clock will be done the first of May, (1856,) and tested by Prof. Peters, at Altona, until it is time for it to accompany the Meridian Circle and the Transit instrument, in July.*”

Whether this glowing description is correct or not, is at present unknown, *for the Clock is not yet received*, and the subscription of Mr. Corning, the only *valid* subscription, which, as he insists, he has ever made, still remains unpaid. A former subscription of \$1,000 had been made by Mr. Corning, upon condition that nineteen other gentlemen should subscribe a similar amount. The sum contemplated by the subscription, and more, was raised; but as it was not contributed in sums of \$1,000 each, Mr. Corning felt himself at liberty to *repudiate*. The Trustees have now but little reason to hope that the Corning Clock, or either of the Corning subscriptions will ever be received.

Dr. Gould returned from Europe, on the 29th of December, 1855. His account of expenses was rendered and immediately audited and allowed. It is but justice to state that these expenses were commendably moderate, being scarcely one hundred dollars more than

the expenses of Mr. Gavit, or Mr. Spencer, who afterwards spent the same time in Europe, and traveled over the same ground, at the charge of the Trustees.

In January, 1856, Dr. Gould addressed a letter to the Directors of the N. Y. Central Railroad Company, signed by himself and Prof. Bache, in which, after stating the advantages of absolute accuracy of time on railroads, and the extent to which the telegraphic method of giving time is carried in Europe, he offered, on the part of the Observatory, to furnish the Central road with time for \$1,500 a year. He adds, "should our offer meet with the response we anticipate, considerable preparation will be needed at Albany; and we address you at this early day, in order that, should you desire it, we may take the necessary steps *for putting the system in operation from and after the Inauguration of the Observatory, in August next.*" The Directors at once accepted the offer, but they have not yet received the "time." Nor has the Institution received the fifteen hundred dollars income, which Dr. Gould's performance of his engagement would have secured.

In a letter on the same day, informing the Trustees of this correspondence, Dr. Gould says: "I would suggest that, in a letter to the Hudson River Railroad, besides leaving out the *injudicious word*, ('Corning' clock,) the sum be put at \$500, and for the Western Railroad, \$500; and insert also, that should the time of any other place, such as Springfield, Worcester or Boston, be preferred

to Albany time, it can be given with equal correctness and facility."

Nor were the railroad corporations to monopolize this accurate regulation of time. In the same letter it is proposed, that "Utica, Rochester and Buffalo be told that the Observatory is ready to regulate their large church clocks or small chamber time pieces, to their own local time." And at the same time, in a letter to the Mayor of New-York, Dr. Gould said: "The Trustees of the Dudley Observatory, which has been erected in Albany, and is to commence its activity in August next, (1856) beg leave to express to your Honor, the pleasure it will afford them to furnish the city of New York with accurate time. Should the proposal meet your approbation, it would be our pride and pleasure, *from and after the day of the Inauguration of the Dudley Observatory*, to give accurate time to your city, within the fraction of a second, by the dropping of a time ball."

The Trustees, in their simplicity, believed all this meant something. They believed that Dr. Gould had a perfect knowledge of all the facts; they thought that he, if any one, knew what the instruments he had ordered were capable of accomplishing, and *when* they could go into operation. They believed that these visions were soon to become realities, and that from and after the time of the Inauguration, the trains on every railroad centering in Albany, would govern their movements, and start from their every station, by the click of the "Corning Clock;" and that *when*, in the



eloquent language of the immortal Everett, "the eternal sun strikes twelve at noon, and the glorious constellations, far up in the everlasting belfries of the skies, chime twelve at midnight"—then, the dropping time ball in every great city on the continent would announce at so many points on earth, what was thus chimed in the "belfries of the skies."

In his letter to the Trustees, promising a "time" revenue to the Observatory, to commence immediately after the Inauguration, Dr. Gould took occasion to caution them against making his plans too public, in the following characteristic terms: "It is not well to suspect the possibility that New York could wish to have the time elsewhere than at her own capital; *but do be cautious how the thing is talked of publicly until the trigger is ready to be pulled.*"

As if to keep the same delusive vision of a "time" revenue before the minds of the Trustees, Dr. Gould again, writing from Mobile, under date of February 4, 1856, says: "There is no reason why all the clocks in the city should not form a circuit for themselves, independent, and be strictly sympathetic."

The effect of these brilliant prospects was, as might be supposed, greatly to increase the confidence of the Trustees in their *adviser*. He had opened up before their delighted vision a career of unparalleled success. Accordingly, when, upon his return from Europe, he informed them that he had not contracted for a Heliometer there, and submitted the proposition that

Mr. Spencer should be employed to construct the instrument, the Trustees cheerfully assented. Dr. Gould went to Canastota, and instructed Mr. Spencer to prepare specifications. It had been supposed that the instrument would cost \$6,000; but the price was raised, as the proposed size was increased, until it reached \$14,000, which sum was agreed to be paid. Dr. Gould represented to the Trustees, in colors as glowing as those with which he depicted the glories of the air-tight, sheltered and noiseless Corning clock, ordered at Altona, or the benefit of the "time balls" to be dropped all over the State, the advantages and splendor of the promised Heliometer, which he had thus ordered. At a meeting of the friends of the Observatory, at the house of Mrs. Dudley, he announced that he had awarded to Mr. Spencer the construction of the Heliometer, and predicted its triumphant success.

At a similar meeting, a few days later, at the house of Judge Parker, Dr. Gould urged, as actually necessary, that Mr. Spencer should be sent to Europe, at the expense of the Observatory, to examine the instruments there; stating, at the same time, his confident belief that, with this advantage, he would be able to construct a better instrument than any which had yet been made. The Trustees, as in everything else, acceded to this proposition.

Not long after this, Dr. Gould proposed that another person should be sent with Mr. Spencer. To reconcile

the Trustees to this further expense, which seemed to them quite unnecessary, he stated that Mr. Spencer was unused to travel, and his life was "too precious to the cause of science to be risked;" and besides, that such were the peculiarities of Mr. Spencer, that a judicious companion might, to use his own language, "*prevent him from going off upon side issues.*" As a further reason for incurring this expense, it was urged that, as time was important, and the work of constructing the Heliometer should be entered upon with the least possible delay, it might be a saving of time to send with Mr. Spencer, a traveling companion. The name of Mr. Gavit was proposed for this office. After some hesitation, and not without reluctance, the Trustees finally yielded their assent to this proposition also.

On the 12th of January, 1856, writing from Cambridge, Dr. Gould says: "If my efforts have met with the approval of those at whose instance they were exerted, it is all the reward I could ask, after the satisfaction of my own conscience. If the noble instruments you are to have, every one of them containing decided advances in construction and application of new principles, shall be used with *diligence*, tact and good judgment, the science of the world, as well as the intellectual attainments and position of America, will be the gainer." He also writes: "Since I saw you, I have ordered one Chronograph and clock, and given direction for estimates and plans for two other Chronographs, the dial for the sidereal and the mean time clock, the adjustment to

regulate railroad and other clocks on the circuits, the observing keys and the time ball."

Much attention was also given by Dr. Gould, at this time, to efforts to make the Inauguration ceremonies, at which the great instruments were to be exhibited, and the time from the Observatory sent forth to all parts of the State, an entire success. Even the character of the parties invited to be present, engaged his attention. On the 23d of March he wrote to the Trustees cautioning them to "weigh all the names of the parties invited, carefully, in order to avoid diminishing the honor of the invitations, by affording them to second or third rate people."

Again, on the 29th of March, he writes: "Do not invite \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ \* \* \* \* The invitations should be *select*, in order to make them *complimentary*. A scientific man, like an artist, is sensitive; and the inviting a single man of the wrong kind, while one of the right kind is omitted, might destroy half the charm of the whole affair. To hear that the invitation, which should be a high honor to him, had gone to Mr. Jones, or Mr. Smith, would do much harm."

Nor was his anxiety for the success of the Observatory, confined to the exclusion of those "second and third rate men," Messrs. Smith and Jones, from the Inauguration. Having learned, that Messrs. Spencer and Gavit's departure for Europe had been delayed, he expressed much concern, and wrote: "I will not believe

it possible that Spencer should not go just at the last moment. Certainly he ought not to undertake the Helio-meter without having visited the European instruments, and he needs Gavit's companionship."

In April, Dr. Gould returned from New Orleans. The enlargement of the two wings of the Observatory building was then under consideration. The plans were prepared under his direction, and subject to his approval. On the 23d of April, 1856, writing from Cambridge, Dr. Gould says: "The drawings I have been studying, and although my want of familiarity with architecture prevents me from understanding them fully, as yet, I hope to have a clear comprehension of the plan of alteration to-day." On the following day he writes, "the plan for changing the building—that is, altering the *two* wings—is satisfactory and very handsome."

On the 28th of April, Dr. Gould, still holding out the expectation that the Observatory would be in working order by the end of August, writing from Cambridge, says: "I have received a letter from Prof. P. P. Brown, who wants to be assistant at the Dudley Observatory, and propose, of course, to refer him to you, after informing him that the Observatory will not commence its activity before the last of August."

On the 7th of May, Dr. Gould writes about the piers, which he says will be seven or seven and a half tons weight, and asks: "Is there no derrick or traveling frame in Albany that can be obtained to set them



with?" He states, also, that "the Chronograph promises to be a decided success," and says: "I have done all I can to hurry the time ball matter up." The latter, however, he states, hangs, on account of the inactivity of Mr. Blunt, of New-York, who, he says, "promises immensely, and does nothing at all."

On the 12th of May, 1856, Dr. Gould writes in the following gratifying style: "I have *no doubt* that the Transit and Clock will be ready in July, as promised; and have not abandoned all hope of the Meridian Circle yet. But I feel *very great confidence that it will not be more than one month later.*"

On the 15th of May, Dr. Gould writes: "The plans for the piers have been entirely ready these six weeks, and I will bring them to Albany, Monday or Tuesday next. My time shall be passed in work, and not in play, this time."

In a letter written on the 26th of May, he evinced his deep interest in the affairs of the Observatory, in a somewhat melancholy strain. He sighs for a "full guaranty that the Institution shall keep up its vigor and activity," in case both Prof. Bache and himself "be taken away." He then proceeds in language which now seems to have been almost prophetic: "No man knows the dark and shadowy future; and the organization of the Dudley Observatory ought to be so thorough and permanent, that, were one director to die, *the Trustees should be prepared to fill his place with another*, without deranging the activity of the work."



In June, 1856, Dr. Gould writes from Cambridge, that he has received encouragement that the Meridian Circle will be finished and shipped by the end of July, and states that the maker wants the inscription for it. He says: "Please tell me on Monday, to Boston, whether you like this, and how you would change it, if at all:

"OLCOTT MERIDIAN CIRCLE.

*Made for THE DUDLEY OBSERVATORY, at Albany,*

BY  
PISTOR & MARTINS,  
BERLIN, 1856."

On the 10th of July, Dr. Gould first writes that his plans for experimental chronographs do not work quite satisfactorily. He says: "I was more sanguine of their brilliant success, a fortnight ago, than I am now; but while we are trying experiments, we take care to put a peg through all that we have already secured."

About this time, Dr. C. H. F. Peters, an eminent practical astronomer, arrived in Albany. He had been detailed to the Observatory, by the Superintendent of the Coast Survey, in whose employ he then was. His arrival was hailed with much satisfaction by the Trustees, to whom the continued absence of Dr. Gould had been a source of much regret and embarrassment. Their gratification was increased, by the high encomiums bestowed upon Dr. Peters by both Prof. Bache and Dr. Gould. The latter had represented him to be a man of "vast experience, practical ability, and great genius." And the Trustees had the more reason to congratulate themselves

upon their good fortune, in securing so able a man as a resident at the Observatory, since they were also aware that Lieutenant Gillis, formerly Superintendent of the National Observatory, at Washington, and upon whose work on the Chilian Expedition, Dr. Peters had been employed in aid of Dr. Gould, had offered him a place in his corps, at a salary of \$1,200 a year, with three assistants; an offer which was subsequently repeated.

On the 30th of July, Dr. Gould writes from Cambridge: "The clocks are progressing, and the chronograph, number one, is nearly completed. I think we are very fortunate in having the aid of so skillful and energetic a man as Dr. Peters, in arranging matters." The Trustees were of the same opinion.

Throughout June and July, the work at the Observatory was delayed through the necessity of transmitting plans to Cambridge or Washington, and especially because of the difficulty in deciding upon the sort of piers to be obtained. Dr. Gould, desired to have the largest solid stone piers in the world, irrespective of cost; and the Trustees, relying upon him as a practical astronomer, were anxious to second his views. It is true, they sometimes considered those views peculiar. Prof. Bartlett, the eminent astronomer at West Point, who was regarded as competent to prepare plans for the National Observatory, at Washington, suggested free-stone piers as proper to be used. But Dr. Gould wrote as follows: "Professor Bartlett's talk about free-stone piers is simply absurd.

It is not his speciality, very evidently. There is no difficulty in obtaining either that or granite, of any size; but bricks would be just as good as free-stone." The Trustees were not then aware that Dr. Gould's views were *theoretical* only, and that he was without practical experience. It is needless to recapitulate the annoying delay in the work, caused by this desire to follow the counsel of an absent adviser; but it was seriously felt by the Trustees, and much embarrassed their operations.

Early in August, the anxiety of Prof. Bache to give to the Observatory in every respect a national character, and to take from it all features of a local nature, induced him to hint at a change of name. "Dudley," was a simple family name; "Albany," a comparatively small city. Neither suited his ambition, which was of course purely of a patriotic, unselfish character, and overshadowed those sentiments of personal gratitude and esteem, which he could not fail to feel for the lady whose name it had taken, and the city whose liberality had raised it up. On the 11th of August, writing to Mr. Olcott, he says: "I hesitate to make suggestions to you, who have done so much, so nobly, and so wisely in this cause; but I should be recreant to the confidence you have shown in me, did I not ask you to consider *the name* of the Observatory, and all the consequences that may flow from it. The *Dudley* Observatory, at *Albany*! You will see *the train of thought* that these names excite, and will follow it

more clearly to its *consequences*, with your business precision of mind." That "train of thought" was followed out by Mr. Olcott when, three days afterwards, on the 14th of August, having obtained from Mrs. Dudley the munificent donation of \$50,000, he suggested and procured to be inserted, in her letter to the Trustees, the closing paragraph, which reads as follows: "For myself, I offer as my share of the required endowment, the sum of \$50,000, in addition to the advances which I have already made; and I trust that the *name* which you have given to the Observatory, may not be considered as an undeserved compliment, and that it will not diminish the public regard, by giving to the Institution a seemingly individual character." The Trustees are not aware that any attempt has since been made to change the name of the *Dudley Observatory*, at *Albany* !

In her letter to the Trustees announcing the donation, Mrs. Dudley also says :

"I need scarcely refer in a letter to you, to the modest beginning and gradual growth of the Institution over which you preside, and of which you are the RESPONSIBLE GUARDIANS."

This great gift was placed in the hands of Mr. Olcott without the knowledge of any other person; but on the 26th of August, two days before the Inauguration, he deemed it proper to inform the gentlemen of the advisory Scientific Council, of the fact.

The Observatory had now arrived at one of those great events that constitute an era in its history.

The Inauguration was to take place on the 28th of August. It was to occur at the time of the meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and to constitute its great feature of attraction. To it, the Trustees had looked forward with intense interest. It brought with it, it is true, some reasons for sadness. It came with hopes unfulfilled, and expectations disappointed. Of all the splendid promises made by Dr. Gould, and the brilliant visions which he had kept before their eyes, *not a single one was realized*. No Transit, no Meridian Circle, nor any other instrument attracted the admiration of the scientific world. No marvelously constructed clock, noiselessly recorded the accurate passage of time, as it was chimed forth from the "belfries of the skies." No "time ball" fell in the great commercial emporium. No bond of ever acting sympathy, linked together the clocks of Rochester, Buffalo, Troy and Albany. No railroad station exhibited to the scientific members, on their way, any evidence that the trains upon which they traveled, were deriving their time from the Dudley Observatory. The Observatory itself had the appearance of a ruin. The walls of both wings were open to receive the piers and cap-stones, and to permit the working of the "Ingenious Crane," or as it might more properly be called, the Automaton Mason. Instead of leading their distinguished visitors up the hill, to spread before them the glories of the model instruments, the efforts of the Trustees were directed towards keeping them within the limits of the Capitol,



and the large tent, and inducing them to forget the deficiency of the *real*, in the brilliancy of the *fanciful*.

The ceremonies of the Inauguration, despite all the drawbacks, were imposing and deeply interesting. The magnificent oration of Edward Everett, fraught with deep thought and impassioned eloquence—a gem, whose brilliancy has since flashed before the admiring eyes of millions on both sides of the Atlantic—was alone sufficient to make that day ever memorable in the annals of science.

Dr. Gould also delivered an address, in which he gave evidence of the high esteem in which he then held those Trustees, whose promptness to follow his advice, and whose reliance on his promises, had been so marked and gratifying. He alluded to one member of the Board, in the following glowing language :

“ And now I come to the mention of a name whose sympathetic influence calls up all the generous feelings of the heart ; a name which I cannot lightly utter, for it belongs to a man whom to know is to love, and to mention is but to praise. It is his, whose agency is evident in all good works ; whose thoughtfulness is conspicuous in all kindly actions ; his, to whom is, in great part, due the establishment of many a noble institution in this city of his adoption and his love, forming an imperishable monument of his public spirit ; his, whose efforts were among the most untiring in behalf of the University ; his, whose mild and gentle persuasiveness, whose modest, retiring, disinterested zeal, conferred on this Association a priceless boon, under the form of asking one, when he persuaded it to disregard all precedent, by returning after the expiration of a single lustrum, and holding now, for the second time, its session in this great-hearted Capital. There is no need of saying that this name is JAMES H. ARMSBY. God bless him ! for he is blessing God’s earth, and the world is better that he lives in it ! ”



Of the President, he spoke in the following terms of admiration :

“The Meridian Circle and the Transit instrument were ordered in Berlin. They are of unsurpassed magnitude, and of a new construction, the chief points of which have already been presented to the physical section of the Association, which has this day adjourned. And it was my high privilege, on that occasion, to become the vehicle of the public announcement, that the Trustees, at the instance of the Scientific Council had given to that new and exquisitely beautiful Meridian Circle, the honored name of OLCOTT, which is already engraved upon it, in deep and ineffaceable characters, to endure so long as the instrument itself exists. Not that the name needed the chisel, but that the Trustees felt it due to themselves to find some outlet for their overflowing admiration and respect.”

He gave elaborate descriptions of the several instruments he had ordered in Europe, not one of which had arrived. He also spoke of the Heliometer he had ordered of Mr. Spencer, in the following terms :

“The great Dudley Heliometer, (for which Mrs. Dudley, who had so munificently raised her \$6,000 to \$8,000, has now raised the \$8,000 to \$14,000,) is to be built by our countryman, Spencer, here, in this city of Albany. Ladies and gentlemen, let me assure you, here, in the presence of these five thousand witnesses, on this solemn occasion, with the full sense of the responsibility before the whole scientific world which the declaration entails, let me say to you, that the Trustees of the Dudley Observatory will never regret it.”

The Trustees have been informed that a rough drawing of the Heliometer was made in January last, but the work of construction has not yet been commenced. Still the Trustees have the comforting assurance of Dr. Gould, with the full sense of his responsibility before the whole scientific world, that they will never regret the order he gave to the intended maker.

In the same speech, Dr. Gould says :

“ The enlargement of the building needs but a few weeks for its completion. By that time, the meridian instruments will have arrived, and the clocks will be sending their mystic signals to all the dials, *even as the Corning Clock now ticks above my head.*”

It required great boldness, and a most unenviable indifference to truth, to enable any man to make such a statement, in the presence of such an audience. That the deception might be the more complete, the speaker, when he alluded to the “ Corning Clock,” turned significantly to a clock exhibited by Mr. Gavit, upon the rear of the platform.

In September, 1856, another important event occurred. Mr. Olcott gave a further donation, of ten thousand dollars, to the Observatory. The news was communicated to the Scientific Council, and drew forth the following response from Prof. Bache :

MOUNT DESERT, MAINE, }  
Sept. 20, 1856. }

*My Dear Sir:* The announcement of Mr. Olcott's liberal donation to the Observatory, has filled me with delight, and I cannot refrain from sitting down and expressing it to you, since it overflows and will not be kept from running over. In point of *fact*, I know, the donation is not one-fifth of Mrs. Dudley's. But I cannot help considering, that, all circumstances considered, *it is many, many times as great.* Will Gen. Van Rensselaer—will Mr. Corning—will others like them, stand still and see this liberality, unmoved? It ought *not* to be! *Will* it be, my dear Doctor?

Ever truly yours,

Dr. J. H. Arnsby.

A. D. BACHE.

Dr. Gould, writing also from Mount Desert, Sept. the 18th, indulges in similar expressions of gratitude.

“ Your letter brought the first tidings of Mr. Olcott's noble gift. *A greater one, in truth, than Mrs. Dudley's.* It is a privilege to be connected, *in any way*, with such men; a high privilege, and I feel it deeply as such. I want to write to Mr.

Olcott, to tell him how much we honor him, not merely for this munificence, but for all his noble deeds. And yet how feeble is anything one can say."

About the same time, Messrs. J. F. Rathbone and Wm. H. De Witt raised their donations, respectively, to \$5,500 and \$3,000.

These encouraging events gave new zeal to the Council, and Prof. Bache, writing on September 22, says:

"Now that matters have gone so far at Albany, why not, (I *know* you will, though I ask the question,) consult Dr. Gould about *all the details*? I would not now *move a peg* without his advice. This, I am sure, is your sentiment, and I will at once talk to the Doctor."

On the 16th of September, Dr. Gould wrote to the Trustees, that he had arranged for a youth, in the employ of the U. S. Coast Survey, to come to Albany to assist Dr. Peters. He says: "The youth is *a mere boy—only seventeen*, or thereabouts—but ready to aid in any way he can, and so, I doubt not, will be of *some* service to Dr. Peters."

This "mere boy," only seventeen years of age, is one of the young gentlemen on the hill. He is now pronounced, after the lapse of two years, not only a finished astronomer, but to be over twenty-one years of age!

In October, the plans for a dwelling-house were first considered. In reference to the location of the building Dr. Gould wrote as follows:

"As for the *location* of the house, of course *you* will judge. My views were simply founded on personal opinion. Whatever you decide on, I will aid to the best of my ability. When you ask for my opinion, I give it without reserve, and without any intention of taking it amiss, if you decide otherwise."

In October, Dr. Gould wrote to the President: "Mr. Clark brought in his bill to-day for \$250, for the comet seeker. I have approved it and sent it to you." The bill was immediately paid.

The liberal donations in September appeared to have revived the interest felt by the Scientific Council in the affairs of the Observatory. On the 22nd of October, Prof. Bache wrote to the Trustees, from New-York: "Is it not time for the Trustees of the Dudley to ask Dr. Gould to take temporary charge, so as to have the benefit of his advice *officially*, in what is going on? He cannot, of course, accept permanently any connection until we see how matters turn out."

This pause to see "how matters turn out," was necessary, because Dr. Gould was endeavoring to obtain a more lucrative Professorship, in Columbia College; in which, however, as the public are aware, he was unsuccessful.

On the 24th of October, Prof. Bache deemed it prudent again to remind the Trustees of his suggestion, that Dr. Gould should be appointed Director of the Observatory, and excused himself for thus interfering, by referring to the *extreme modesty* of Dr. Gould, in all matters relating to himself personally. He writes:

"Dr. Gould is so extremely delicate in all that relates to personal matters, that I have always found it difficult, in my official intercourse, to know what he desires, even when I was anxious to have my cue from him. This is why I spoke of the directorship."

About this time, Dr. Gould urged the Trustees to purchase a calculating machine, of the achievements of

which he had spoken very enthusiastically. Neither Transit, Meridian circle, Chronographs, Clocks or Dials, in all of which large investments had been already made, were received, and nothing was in working order. Great as was their respect for science, and entire as was their confidence in their scientific advisers, they could not always repress the regret and disappointment they felt, that, as yet, so little that was visible or practical, had been accomplished. Still, they retained their confidence in Dr. Gould, and gave their consent that he should purchase "the calculating machine," although the funds of the Observatory scarcely justified the expense. In a letter written on the 2d of November, after expressing the satisfaction which the determination of the Trustees afforded him, he says: "It is a long, long cherished hope of mine." He proposed that Mr. J. F. Rathbone's previously subscribed \$5,000, should be appropriated to this purchase. To this, also, the Trustees assented. Writing again on the 7th of November, he says:

In securing the calculating engine, I see the inauguration of a new era, for which the world will be indebted to Mr. Rathbone and the Dudley Observatory. The invention has long been made, and only the self-reliance was needed, which should induce an institution to adopt it, and put it into action. It is like the steamboat for navigation—the computer's locomotive.

The Trustees will not attempt to justify themselves for permitting an expenditure, so obviously injudicious. The "machine" had been exhibited and held for sale, both in Paris and in London, without finding a purchaser. Its utility had yet to be demonstrated.



Not another Observatory in the world had ventured to invest the amount required, in such an experiment. It was left for the Trustees of the Dudley Observatory, led on by a blind confidence in Dr. Gould, to expend their money in this novel adventure. The "*machine*" was purchased in December, at a cost of five thousand dollars. It arrived in April, 1857, but was laid aside for more than twelve months, when it brought forth a column of printed figures, and the Trustees were charged two hundred dollars for "bringing it into use."

Near the close of November, 1856, the Transit instrument, which was to be furnished by the Coast Survey, and to have been in active work in the preceding August, was received. It was laid away in its boxes, and has never since been disturbed.

In the fall of 1856, Messrs. Olcott and Armsby conceived the purpose of appealing to the merchants, underwriters and friends of Science, in New York. Writing to Mr. Olcott on this subject, in November, Prof. Bache says: "Most heartily do I wish you success in your noble and untiring efforts, and only regret that I cannot do something to assist you in them."

In a letter to Dr. Armsby, he writes:

Yours of the 27th was received this morning. It seems to me that the proposition *to present the Observatory matter to the city of New-York*, and the way in which you propose to do it, *is a very good one.*

Dr. Gould, writing at the same time, on the same subject, says:

I shall be most anxious to hear of the results of next week, in New-York. Your and Mr. Olcott's hopefulness are a strong basis



for faith, *and the only one we have found*. But when your zeal and persuasiveness is [are] brought to bear conjointly with his wise and discreet knowledge of man, and experience, what may we not hope ?

Although the funds of the Observatory already exceeded anything that had originally been contemplated, yet these efforts to increase the endowment, were deemed essential, in consequence of the repeated assurances of Dr. Gould, that more funds were required to secure the objects of the Observatory.

The New York *Times*, having published an article hinting at a New-York Observatory, Prof. Bache, writing under date of the 13th of December, says :

That article will help you, by showing New-Yorkers that there is a deeper depth than that into which you wish the Gotham liberalities to plunge. If any man says, ' I will wait for the New-York Observatory,' do you say, ' we are collecting for *that* also. How much shall we put you down for ? In the meantime, if *that* should fail, give us the promise of half that sum.'

On the 21st of December, 1856, Prof. Bache again wrote to Mr. Olcott, expressing his satisfaction that the latter agreed with him, in thinking it unnecessary to take notice of the article in the New-York *Times*. He says :

To take issue with an Editor, ignorant of matters of science, would be undignified, and hardly help our cause. He would be sure to have the last word, and the less he knows the better ; for he could go on in such a strain as that article forever.

About this time the Trustees were preparing to issue the Inauguration pamphlet. Dr. Gould being very desirous of having it entirely correct, wrote to amend Mr. Everett's spelling of certain names. He also requested, as a personal favor, that inasmuch as his

own name was mentioned but twice in the oration, it might be entirely omitted; or if that was not possible, that it should be inserted simply as "Mr. Gould," as he did not desire to be identified in any manner with Mr. Everett, or to figure in the company of Mr. Everett's "heroes." The Trustees did not feel authorised to make any changes in Mr. Everett's oration at Dr. Gould's request, which was conveyed in the following letter :

To-day I saw Mr. Everett's authorized edition of his address, advertised in the papers, and procured one. I had supposed that the Boston edition was for private distribution. Glancing over it, I have seen allusions to myself, by name, twice ; once, page 15, and again, page 33, note—and I will beg you earnestly, as a personal favor, to have it omitted in the Observatory edition, inasmuch as its publication there *would be extremely unwelcome to me*. Will you provide for it, and thus greatly oblige me? If Mr. Everett's *conscience* does not permit him to omit the acknowledgment, page 33, *which I would much prefer*, the *whole* name might, at any rate, be abridged into plain, "*Mr. Gould.*" I beg this *earnestly*, for it is *a matter of feeling with me*.

Do not forget, too, in the printing, that Herchel's name has but one *l* in it. It occurs pages 18, 36, 37, 38, 39, 44, 45. Two of his *heroes*, page 40, also have their names spelt wrong ; but the mistakes *will not be recognized abroad*, to the discredit of the Observatory, as the mis-spelling of Herchel's name could not fail to be.

I have telegraphed and written to Mr. Hague, and hope that all will yet go well, both on the hill and with the new firm.

Ever faithfully yours,

B. A. GOULD, JR.

On the 31st of December, 1856, Dr. Gould writes to acknowledge the receipt of a draft, from the Trustees. On this occasion he says :

Before the time signals can be given, the Transit instrument, at least, must be in active employment, the Clocks going, *and a new telegraph wire laid to New York city*. In so important a matter, it would be too much risked, to trust to any line where we could be interrupted.

The necessity for a *new telegraph line*, from Albany to New York, was, to the Trustees, a startling proposition. It created great surprise. Certainly, it could not have entered into Dr. Gould's calculation, when he so confidently promised that time should be transmitted regularly to New-York city, and to all the railroads, on and after the 28th day of the preceding August.

The efforts of the Trustees to raise funds, seemed now to promise so well, that the Scientific Council were animated with new zeal. On the 31st of December, Prof. Bache writes from Washington, in the following flattering terms, to Mr. Olcott :

Science, which has no house—world-wide in its dwelling—will wish you many happy years. I should not wonder if, captivated by Mr. Olcott and Dr. Armsby, she gave up her wanderings, and *consented* to abide in Albany. What you write is indeed cheering. Persevering efforts ! You deserve to succeed. I should not wonder if astronomers put you among the *planets* yet !—moving so steadily, so undisturbed by small causes, so right to the predicted point !

The year 1857, opened with a gratifying increase of subscriptions, secured mainly through the energy of the President and Secretary of the Board of Trustees. As others have claimed the credit of obtaining these subscriptions, it may be as well to give a few of the letters received about this time :

[FROM GERRIT SMITH, Esq.]

THOS. W. OLCOTT, Esq. : *My Dear Sir*—On my return from Albany, last evening, I found your letter of the 21st inst. My prompt response to this beautiful letter, is my draft for \$1,000.

[FROM A. A. LOW, Esq., New-York.]

THOS. W. OLCOTT, Esq. : *Dear Sir*—The pamphlet sent by you has interested me, and the Treasurer of the Dudley Observa-

tory is hereby authorised to draw on me for \$1,000, in aid of the fund.

[From WM. B. ASTOR, Esq., New York.]

THOS. W. OLCOTT, Esq.: *My Dear Sir*—I propose to contribute \$1,000 to the Dudley Observatory fund, and request you to be pleased to inform me whether I shall send a check to you, or to whom, for that amount.

[From ROBERT DUNLOP, Esq.]

THOS. W. OLCOTT, Esq.: *Dear Sir*—I have your favor of the 4th. I enclose my note for \$500, for the Dudley Observatory.

[From JOHN GREIG, Esq.]

THOS. W. OLCOTT, Esq.: *My Dear Sir*—I am much obliged to you for your letter of the 10th inst., and for the accompanying documents regarding the Dudley Observatory; and I beg leave to enclose you a draft, on the Albany City Bank, for \$1,000, which I request you to accept from me, as a contribution towards carrying into effect that great and glorious enterprise, the success of which will tend so much to the advancement of science, and to your own honor, as one of its most liberal promoters.

A score of similar letters might be given; but as these are a specimen of all the rest, it is deemed unnecessary.

On the 15th of January, 1857, Prof. Bache writes: "Your subscriptions grow in number, indeed. May they reach your highest figure!"

On the 2d of March, Dr. Gould, as if still anxious to keep up the courage and confidence of the Trustees, although no apparent progress was making, writes from Cambridge: "Everything seems to be going most satisfactorily, and hastening towards completion. I have heard from our clock, which was completed, all but the "putting together."

Nearly a year and a half has since elapsed, and the clock has not yet been "put together!"

About the same date, Dr. Gould writes: "I have been over-running my authority, by purchasing the Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London, from the Astor Library. I send by this mail a draft on you for \$343.75, which includes the expenses of boxing."

The draft, as usual, was immediately paid; but the Observatory building was not then in order.

A few days later, Dr. Gould writes: "I have drawn on you, in favor of Mr. Farmer, for \$250. He came out, saying he was in need of money, suddenly, to meet a note."

The draft was immediately paid; but the money was not due, nor were the Chronographs or clocks finished until May, 1858.

A few days later, he writes: "We shall have to be making comparatively heavy demands upon you soon for the dome work, observing chairs, &c., &c., which are essentials."

At the same time, it is proper to state that Dr. Gould evinced commendable interest in the pecuniary affairs of the Institution; for, in one letter, he asks: "How have your donations run up, since February 23d?" And in another, he anxiously enquires: "How come on the legislative appropriation, and the donations? Has there been anything more from New-York, in the pecuniary line?"

These enquiries were, doubtless, promptly responded to; but, at the same time, the Trustees could not but



eel, that it was time that some practical results should be realized. Not a single contract had been fulfilled. Not a solitary promise had been redeemed. It will not be thought surprising, therefore, that at this period, one of the Trustees should have ventured to write a letter to Dr. Gould, which drew forth the following reply :

Shall I tell you, my dear sir, how much your letter has grieved me? At first I thought I would not, for I am sure you would not willingly give me pain. But the implied reproach was not deserved. Hopefulness is a compound of enthusiasm and experience, and for the most part not within our control. If so little progress is making, as you think, I am sorry it should be needful to assure you that it is no fault of mine. Remembering these things, and, also, that it is but a small part of all the labor that makes itself manifest in the form of results, you should not, I think, be disposed to censure me for lukewarmness; and if I could not claim that your censure is ill deserved, I might plead nervous exhaustion, in extenuation of a great deal of remissness; and if you palliate those who have behaved so badly, by assuming that they have done the best they could, surely you will not deny as much to me.

Complaints had only been drawn forth from the Trustees, by a painful sense of duty. Large sums of money had been invested in the Observatory; more was daily asked, by the Trustees, from a liberal public. But they felt the embarrassment of soliciting donations for an institution, on behalf of which such flattering promises had been *publicly* made, and which had, as yet, accomplished no results, that could be urged as a claim on popular favor and support. They felt, too, that those who had kindly volunteered advice and counsel on all scientific matters, and who displayed so much feeling when their suggestions were not carried out to the very letter, might, while pressing upon the Trustees



the necessity of a more liberal endowment of the Institution, make an effort to supply them with some sort of claim upon the public liberality. The Trustees knew well enough that extravagant promises of what *might* one day be accomplished for science, would not enlist public sympathy and aid so effectually, as some practical results; and they began to realize the fact, that these "practical results" were not likely to be secured by paper bulletins, issued at a distance of some two hundred miles from the scene of action.

The reader may well pause here and enquire what ought the Trustees, at this time, to have done? They had thus far relied upon promises, made by a volunteer adviser; they had waited nearly twelve months, and were then apparently more distant than ever, from the fulfilment of their expectations. What ought they to have done?

What they *did* do, was to accept Dr. Gould's excuses, and, hoping for the best, continue on as before. The Trustees have no desire to shield themselves from the censure which this course is likely to draw upon them, from men of common sense and business habits.

On the 22d of April, Dr. Gould writes to Mr. Olcott, expressing his conviction that the Observatory must be conducted, not only with a view to "its results for astronomy, and the laws which govern the celestial hosts," but, also, as a means of "attracting, enlisting, and concentrating, lovers and patrons of science." The

Trustees, it is perhaps needless to say, were then, and remain now, of the same opinion.

Dr. Gould also seems to have appreciated, at this time, the value of "practical results;" for he writes:

"To-day's Astronomical Journal, No. 102, contains the '*first fruits*' of the Observatory—the first published observations made there, in the form of observations, in two nights, of one of the comets now visible, *made by Dr. Peters, with the small instrument*, which was exhibited by Mr. Clark, at the meeting of the Association, in August. It has illustrated the need of star catalogues so much, that I have taken steps towards providing the most important and needful."

The Trustees were rejoiced at these "first fruits" of the Observatory. Before this, Dr. Peters, by his evident anxiety to bring the Observatory instruments into practical use, by his earnest zeal in the science to which he is devoted, and by his unobtrusive and winning manners, had gained their esteem and confidence; and they observed, with deep regret, a disposition to interpose unnecessary obstacles, in the way of his success.

In the early part of May, Dr. Gould visited Albany, for a few days. Writing, on his return, to one of the Trustees, he says:

"Of course it was you who settled my bill at the Delavan, although they would not tell me at the office. It was of a piece with your constant thoughtfulness and generosity, but had I suspected you, I would have headed you off."

It may be supposed, at first, that this incident can have no connection with the history of events at the Dudley Observatory; and the good taste of introducing this extract may be questioned. But when it is remembered that the Trustees, and especially the one to whom

the letter was written, have been charged with offering every possible annoyance and obstruction to Dr. Gould, at this very time ; when it is borne in mind, that in a report to the Scientific Council, in December, 1857, Dr. Gould asserts that, *for a year past*, he has been subject to "continual interference" and "personal annoyance" from the Trustees, and has since declared that his bed in Albany had been "a bed of thorns," the reason and propriety of this quotation will at once be conceded.

On the 19th of May, 1857, Dr. Gould writes to one of the Trustees: "Your kind enclosure of \$300 has come to hand, and I have to thank you very much for your thoughtfulness. It will more than cover the present proportion of deficit. Your letter was sweet, but very short."

This remittance, sent to him by Dr. Armsby, was to relieve Dr. Gould from what was represented as his *personal loss* in the publication of the Astronomical journal. It was another of the "thorns" in his Albany "bed."

A few days later, Dr. Gould wrote as follows: "About the house, (to be erected, in connection with the Observatory,) *I have no preference*, and am desirous of leaving it entirely with you, if you will forgive my shirking the trouble. The only reasons for selecting wood, were the supposed greater cheapness of the material and rapidity of erection; but though the question of durability may be secondary, the *fire-proofness is certainly very important.*"

On the 20th of June, Dr. Gould writes to the President :  
 “ The work upon the hill is apparently going on well. I trust that your arrangements will be as fruitful and successful *as they are wisely and judiciously devised*. Enclosed is a draft for \$129.50, the purchase money of a set of books for the Observatory, which are daily due in New-York.”

The money for the draft was remitted on the day after the receipt of the letter.

In the meantime, Dr. Peters, the resident Observer at the Institution, being unable to bring the great instruments into use, applied himself to his science with such as were at his command.

On the 25th of July, 1857, the Olcott comet was discovered by Dr. Peters. The importance of this discovery was, at the time, appreciated and acknowledged by the late Director, and Scientific Council. Dr. Gould, in a letter dated Cambridge, August 4th, 1857, says: “ *It is a very pretty idea to give the comet the esteemed name of the excellent Mr. Olcott.*” This was before the late remarkable discovery by the Scientific Council, that the “ridiculous procedure” of thus naming the comet, was “entirely unwarranted by astronomical usage.” The latter fact, although unknown to Dr. Gould, had not, it seems, escaped the research of his greater astronomical associates. The late Director was so highly gratified, that in another letter to a gentleman in this city, dated August 5th, 1857, he gives some

hints for bringing the comet into notice, through items that would be "snapped up by the press." He says:

"Little notices of a few lines, conveying, each of them, some information relative to the comet, will be snapped up and run round the press, as items, when puffs would not; and it will be easy, with care, so to frame the language of a little paragraph, every two or three days, as to keep it before the public, without offending the tastes of scientific men. For instance, one paragraph could state that it is approaching both the sun and the earth, and will be nearest the one on such a day, and the other on such another time. Later, another paragraph might say how *bright* it is likely to become. Later still, that it passes so many millions of miles from the earth, at its nearest approach. *If it ever shows a tail.* This is an interesting fact. And into every one of these paragraphs, the name of the Dudley Observatory may be *unostentatiously* introduced, so as not to give the paragraphs the appearance of a *puff*, written for the purpose."

The discovery of the comet was soon heralded forth through the press. In these notices, as was natural, the name of the discoverer was mentioned, and much praise was awarded to him. It was not, of course, suspected at the time, that Scientists were so far liable to the feelings and frailties of common humanity, that the credit won by one astronomer could prove gall and wormwood to another. How the discovery which had rewarded the long night watchings, and the zeal and energy of Dr. Peters, could be suddenly transferred to the "masterly inactivity" of Dr. Gould, and thus create *him* the discoverer of the "fourth comet of 1857," neither the Trustees nor the Press could understand. But, however this may be, the zeal shown by Dr. Peters, and his entire devotion to his favorite science, had given him a claim upon the regard of the people of Albany, who had witnessed with surprise and



mortification, the inefficiency which so distinctly characterized the plans and arrangements of Dr. Gould.

On the 21st of September, Dr. Gould, writing from Cambridge, says that nothing can be done now on the clocks and dials, in consequence of Mr. Farmer's sickness, and adds: "Now I suppose we *must make up our minds to rest awhile on our oars*; for in the present frightful pecuniary crisis, it will be futile to anticipate donations."

Surprised at the tenor and tone of this letter, and believing that in place of keeping up the continued cry of "Give! Give!" some effort should be made to obtain some useful results from the large amount of money already collected and expended, the Trustees felt constrained to express their disapprobation of this proposed "stop policy."

It may again be asked, why the Trustees did not take measures to terminate the "resting upon the oars," already too long protracted. They had a practical Observer in Albany, ready to prosecute, faithfully and diligently, the Observatory work. His efforts were rendered fruitless by the restraining check held over him by an unofficial "head," exercising authority at a distance, and discouraging all work save that "in the pecuniary line;" prolific in promises, too, and barren in performance. What ought the Trustees to have done?

They wrote to their scientific advisers, and protesting earnestly against any suspension of activity at the



Observatory, urged and entreated them to proceed with the work. In the same letter, they called the attention of Dr. Gould to the fact, that some little money might be obtained from an insurance upon the barometers and thermometers, which had been broken on their passage, if the claim should be properly pressed. Dr. Gould, on the 3d of October, writes as follows :

“That barometer matter *it belonged of course to me to see about*; and it has not been forgotten at any time. But, expecting Mr. Gavit to act in the premises, delicacy prevented me from doing more than ask a question now and then, and I was under the impression that he was taking steps in the premises.

“If you feel so earnestly about the suspension of activity at the Observatory, it shall not be *shut up*, if I can help it. Since I saw you, both Professors Bache and Henry have been here, and together with Pierce, we have had various talks about the Observatory. We find ourselves *entirely unanimous* on the subject. But while *all* entertain the same views which I expressed to you, adverse to any commencement upon an inadequate scale, and favorable to the policy of *awaiting a new flood tide*, we yet will none of us *urge* the *closing up* ENTIRELY, while you feel so strongly opposed to it as I infer from your letter. Consequently, I feel sure that Prof. Bache will authorise me to keep *some ONE* of my party there.

“There will be some difficulty in finding opportunity to train Observers ; and those already accustomed to the use of the class of astronomical instruments which we ought to employ, are rare in this country, as yet. There are some advantages in employing foreigners, but these are usually more than counterbalanced by corresponding evils. *Furthermore, it is a little difficult to devise legitimate Coast Survey work, which can be done there without mounting the great instruments, and I would earnestly dissuade from this.*”

It will not be difficult to imagine the surprise and astonishment with which the Trustees received this communication. They remembered the promises made by their scientific advisers, and upon which the whole arrangements between the Coast Survey and the Observatory were based. They recalled the promises made by

their principal adviser, which had been sanctioned and confirmed by the other members of the Council, before the Inauguration, at the Inauguration, and since that event. They thought of the large amount of money, then reaching over \$50,000, that had been devoted to the Observatory, and expended precisely as the advisory council had recommended; and of the fact that Prof. Mitchell had designed commencing practical operations at the Institution with \$25,000, which he had declared enough for a useful beginning. And they now found the men, upon whose promises and scientific counsel they had relied, anxious to "close up" the Observatory, and only consenting, upon the earnest entreaties and expostulations of the Trustees, that, as a mere show of life, some *one* subordinate of the Coast Survey—a doorkeeper, perhaps—should be left at the Institution. They learned, too, with surprise—and not without some indignation—that the instruments in which they had invested so much—and to secure which with the least possible delay, Dr. Gould had been sent to Europe; which were to have been actively employed, according to his own repeated promises, more than a year before, and which were to have brought into the treasury of the Observatory a very respectable and gratifying income, were not to be mounted at all, or if mounted, would not be available until Observers could be properly trained to use them. Was Dr. Gould himself, then, incompetent to use these instruments, was their first natural enquiry. Had they been making all these

investments at the suggestion of these advisers, only to be told that the instruments secured, were now of no practical use? And where, if a suspension of operations was to take place, were Observers to be trained to the use of those instruments? Certainly, this necessary initiatory step could not be taken, while the Observatory was "closed up," and the instruments remained in the cases in which they had originally been packed. And yet, without consulting with the Trustees, this was the course which had been decided upon, by the Scientific Council.

About this time, a letter was addressed by the President of the Board, to Prof. Bache, in which the facts that had been brought to the notice of Dr. Gould were urged upon his attention, and he was appealed to, to say whether the progress Dr. Gould had made at the Observatory, was such as the promises held forth had warranted the Trustees in anticipating. His reply was as follows :

"I am not conscious that, in my engagements, I have forgotten the encouragement given to you to act in regard to the Dudley Observatory. *It has so far been carried on, by the Coast Survey.* My expectations in regard to the endowment of the Institution have, I dare say, been higher than, with less enthusiasm for the work and the men engaged in it, I should have entertained. Nevertheless, I cannot reproach myself with any want of frankness. We have all labored disinterestedly and with some energy, you most emphatically so. If our expectations have not been realized on either side, I doubt whether saying so to each other will advance the ends we have in prospect. I know it is so with myself, for I feel the last paragraph in your letter as casting a damper upon my future exertions, by the disparagement of the past."

The Trustees had hoped that Prof. Bache would adopt a different tone, and when the grounds of complaint

against Dr. Gould were brought to his knowledge, that he would have at least urged upon that gentleman, who was his subordinate in the Coast Survey, greater zeal and efficiency in the prosecution of the Observatory enterprize. They regretted to find that the charges against Dr. Gould were declared to be "dampers" upon the "future exertions" of Prof. Bache.

On the 6th of November, Prof. Bache wrote to Dr. Peters, ordering that gentleman to leave Albany forthwith, and report himself at Cambridge. Dr. Gould, on the same day, wrote to a Trustee: "Prof. Bache has decided to detach Dr. Peters from my party. In the wisdom and policy of this course, I cannot but coincide."

The Trustees viewed the matter in a different light, and looked with dismay at the recall of Dr. Peters from the Observatory, for what appeared to them very insufficient reasons. His work at the Observatory had been prosecuted with diligence and success. Nor could they sympathize in the apparent jealousy which seemed to have been excited by the terms of commendation in which the public press had spoken of Dr. Peters. The removal had the effect which might have been anticipated. The manner in which it was done, and the motives which prompted it, were alike unworthy of the character of the men who were engaged in it. Dr. Peters could not, with honor or self-respect, longer retain his position in the Coast Survey. He at once tendered his resignation, which was accepted, to take place on the first of the following December.



On the 10th of November, 1857, the Meridian Circle arrived, and was laid away in its boxes, with the Transit instrument, which had remained unopened for about a year. Both instruments, Dr. Gould had promised to have mounted nearly a year and a half before. Torpidity and inaction marked this epoch in the history of the Observatory.

But neither the Trustees, nor the citizens of Albany who felt an interest in the welfare of the Observatory, were willing thus to be deprived of the services of Dr. Peters. An appeal was made to Professor Bache, and he was urged to allow him to continue in Albany. But the appeal was ineffectual. The Professor was inexorable. The offence of Dr. Peters consisted solely in his unwillingness to remove from Albany, even after the Superintendent of the Coast Survey had, as he says, "taken the unusual course of explaining to a subordinate his motives for official action." The offence was deemed unpardonable. Prof. Bache writes: "*Loyalty in a subordinate, my dear sir, is an essential quality, and no knowledge or talent can compensate for the want of it.*"

The Trustees are quite conscious of the fact that this same man, accustomed to the exercise of arbitrary power, and not over-scrupulous in the selection of the means with which to accomplish his ends, is now engaged in a resolute attempt to subject *them* to a similar course of discipline for *their* "insubordination." Assuming a most unwarrantable official superiority, he

would now visit upon the Trustees the same condign punishment which he so unrelentingly meted out to the inoffensive Peters. His proverbial sagacity was never more conspicuously shewn, than in the tools and instrumentalities he has been able to command for this purpose.

Dr. Gould, too, when appealed to, stood firm. He could see no extenuating circumstances in the case. He says : " Dr. Peters was appointed in consequence of my intercession, against Prof. Bache's inclination. Now, after some fifteen months, he proves *disloyal*, declines complying with instructions, and complains of being treated as a mere computer ; and Prof. Bache finds unexpectedly *an enemy and detractor*, where he was entitled to look for a grateful, devoted assistant."

On the 20th of November, a letter from the citizens of Albany was presented to Dr. Peters, expressive of regret at his intended removal.

To this letter Dr. Peters sent an appropriate reply.

The extreme reluctance to part with Dr. Peters, induced another appeal to Prof. Bache, but without effect. His reply to Mr. Olcott bears date the 27th of November, in which he says :

" I must begin by entering my protest against the idea that you occupy an humble position in the great scientific enterprise to which you allude. As well might the earth's polar axis attribute to itself an humble place in the great rotation."

But despite his professed regard for the President, Prof. Bache, in his reply, grew more severe than ever in his denunciation of Dr. Peters, declaring that it was



“contrary to his own judgment” to employ him. So determined was his purpose, that he seemed impatient that any one, even the President, for whom he professed to entertain so great esteem, should dare to interpose between Dr. Peters and the full measure of his vengeance. So sensitive was the Superintendent upon this point, that he wrote :

“You say in your letter ‘one or two assistants under Dr. Peters.’ Pray amend that to ‘one or two assistants under Dr. Gould.’ Unless, indeed, you—but it would be unjust to finish the sentence, and I know that it is because you are not in the habit of looking closely at official relations, which have been ground into me by a West Point Mill Stone, that you put such a phrase in your letter. I wish it was not there, for it adds *feeling* to my *mental determination*, and enlists my *heart* in support of the convictions to which my *head* has come.”

On the 24th of November, Dr. Gould again writes in denunciatory language of Dr. Peters, and adds : “We have all of us *in the Scientific Council* regarded the Observatory *as in the hands of the Coast Survey*, until arrangements upon a larger scale should supersede this.”

This statement is in direct conflict with the denials of Dr. Gould that there was any official connection between the Observatory and the Coast Survey ; but if true, it tends to fix upon the Coast Survey, as well as Dr. Gould, the responsibility of all that inaction, inefficiency and misconduct which have thus far marred the fortunes of the Observatory.

When the 1st of December came, Dr. Gould being still absent from the city, Dr. Peters was requested to remain at the Observatory and take care of the costly instruments and property there, until other arrangements could be made.

On the 9th of December, Prof. Pierce came to Albany, and at a meeting of some of the Trustees and friends of the Observatory, the importance, the necessity even, of taking immediate steps to mount the instruments and commence operations, in reference to the demands of the public, procuring donations and obtaining legislative aid, were urged upon him. He at once yielded to these importunities, and agreed that the instruments at least should be mounted, and some active operations commenced, and that he would so inform Dr. Gould.

That he did so inform him is evident from a letter of Dr. Gould, of the 12th of December, stating: "Prof. Pierce has told me of a meeting of the friends of the Observatory at which he was present, and urged me to go on next week. I regret that the course of the current, *which seemed running so smoothly a month ago*, should have changed to the degree which he describes."

On the 21st of Dec., as now appears from a recent publication, Dr. Gould sent to his associates, in the Scientific Council, a private communication, in the form of a report, (of which the Trustees were entirely ignorant until after the publication of the "Defence of Dr. Gould")—a species of indictment against the Board of Trustees, and especially against individual members with whom he had been on terms of the closest intimacy and friendship. The document is worthy of notice. It will be remembered that Dr. Gould, in several previous letters to the Trustees, as well as in the last, had professed entire satisfaction with all that

had been done by them, and had represented the "current" as running "smoothly" up to the time when the persecution of Dr. Peters commenced. In this "report," however, he sets forth certain "difficulties," which he alleges had existed "since his first connection with the Observatory." He complains of "continual interference, leading alike to very large and unnecessary outlay, and to results at variance with his taste and judgment;" and says: "From you *and my most intimate friends* I have not *for the past year concealed this state of affairs.*" He charges one of the Trustees, with whom he has been on most intimate terms, with "lavish and injudicious expenditures."

When all the history of Dr. Gould's connection with the Observatory is borne in mind—when his letters from which we have quoted, making promises, drawing upon the funds of the Institution, ordering experimental instruments, and professing, not only entire satisfaction, but enthusiastic admiration, for the course of the Trustees, are remembered, what interpretation can be placed upon this remarkable document? For a year past, while making all these promises and professions, he had been thus slandering and maligning the Trustees to his *most intimate friends*. If facts can ever be significant of individual character, they must be so in this instance.

About this time, much public feeling being enlisted in behalf of Dr. Peters, the following letters passed between Dr. Gould and the other members of the

Scientific Council, which, as now appears from the report of December 21st, already alluded to, was a mere formal, or Pickwickian, official correspondence, designed for effect :

*To the Scientific Council of the Dudley Observatory:*

GENTLEMEN—You are acquainted with the circumstances which led to the resignation of Dr. C. H. F. Peters from the Coast Survey, the Superintendent of which had for more than a year permitted me to station him at the Dudley Observatory, as well as with his subsequent continuance at the Observatory, at the request of the Trustees of the Institution.

The Trustees have, with great earnestness, urged me to retain him as one of my assistants, although I could not but express to them my firm conviction that such a connection could not possibly result in the harmonious action indispensable between the head of a work and his subordinates. His course toward the Coast Survey having been such as to impair my confidence in his trustworthiness, and his subsequent action ill calculated to restore it, I could with propriety neither urge the Superintendent of that work to permit him to re-call his resignation, nor yet incur the responsibility of employing him independently, where his example might exert an influence upon the other assistants belonging to the same corps. For these two reasons, I have from the beginning declined to occupy the position in which compliance with this request would place me.

In spite of these earnestly expressed and firmly entertained views, the Trustees have continued to press the step upon me, and with such energy and almost resistless force, that I am unwilling longer to rely upon my own judgment. I have, therefore, announced to them my intention of submitting the question to the Scientific Council, and of being guided by their advice.

May I ask your views upon this matter, at an early day, in order to extricate me from my present embarrassment?

It is proper to add, that in order to yield to the known wishes of the Trustees, as far as possible, I invited Dr. Peters this morning to remain in the Observatory, as assistant, "for the present," an invitation which he instantly declined.

I am, gentlemen, with great respect,  
Your friend and servant,  
B. A. GOULD, JR.

ALBANY, 1857, Dec. 23d.

To this the Scientific Council replied, as follows :

The undersigned, members of the Scientific Council of the Dudley Observatory, having been consulted by the Director, Dr. B. A. Gould, in reference to the expediency of employing Dr. C. H. F. Peters as assistant in the Observatory, are of opinion that, under the circumstances known to them, such an employment would be decidedly inexpedient, and not for the best interests of the Observatory and of science.

Signed

A. D. BACHE,  
JOSEPH HENRY,  
BENJAMIN PIERCE,  
*Scientific Council.*

It would appear, however, that Dr. Gould was willing to get rid of Dr. Peters by other means than through the high-handed action of the Scientific Council. Only two days later, he addressed to that gentleman, who had been so recently denounced as treacherous, incompetent and utterly untrustworthy, the following note :

CAMBRIDGE, 1857, DEC. 25.

*My Dear Sir:* Lieut. Parke, of the N. W. Boundary Survey, has written on that they desire to increase their force next spring, and asking for the nomination of an additional assistant, competent to make and compute the requisite astronomical observations. The compensation will range from \$1,200 to \$1,800 a year, not below the former limit certainly, and almost certain in the case of a *thoroughly qualified* person, to reach the latter figure very soon. Mr. Harris, who went out at \$1,500, now receives \$1,800.

It occurred to me that this might be more agreeable to you than the analogous position which you had in view upon the Mexican expedition. If so, you know that any services of mine are entirely at your disposal; and if you desire it, I am confident that the appointment may be secured.

With kind regards, yours, truly,

B. A. GOULD, JR.

*Dr. Peters.*

Of this letter Dr. Peters took no notice, understanding the spirit that dictated it.

In the meantime the prospects of the Observatory grew darker every day. The donors and the public



were aware that large investments had been made, both in instruments and buildings; that all the expensive instruments, the Transit, the Meridian Circle, the Calculating Machine, were lying idle in the boxes in which they were received, not a single effort having been made to mount them. The two propositions of Mr. Olcott, made to Professor Bache, either that Dr. Gould should himself come to Albany, and take immediate charge of the Observatory, or that his advisory character should still continue, and that Dr. Peters should be a resident Observer, his salary to be paid by the Trustees, were unanswered.

Under these embarrassing circumstances some of the largest donors out of the Board of Trustees, with other citizens of Albany, began to interest themselves, urging the necessity of independent action; and on the first day of January the Trustees received a document, of which the following is a copy:

*To the Trustees of the Dudley Observatory:*

The undersigned, citizens of Albany and donors to the Observatory, feeling, in common with all our citizens, a deep interest in the success of the Institution, beg leave to urge upon the Trustees the necessity of such action as shall insure its going into *immediate activity*. They understand that it has for some time past been in the possession of sufficient funds, and, for more than a year, of most of the instruments and apparatus necessary to commence a course of scientific observations. *They feel that its future success, both in the acquisition of additional means and in the accomplishment of scientific results, must be essentially lessened, IF NOT COMPLETELY DESTROYED, BY ANY FARTHER DELAY.* They would, therefore, beg leave to urge upon the consideration of the Trustees, the propriety of appointing Dr. C. H. F. Peters an observer, *with instructions to take immediate steps to mount the instruments*, and to proceed, with as little delay as possible, in commencing observations, and the



accomplishment of such scientific results, as its present means and facilities may enable it to do.

Signed :

Blandina Dudley,  
 Stephen Van Rensselaer,  
 John F. Rathbone,  
 John V. L. Pruyn,  
 Howard Townsend,  
 Thurlow Weed,  
 William Cassidy,  
 C. Comstock,  
 Charles L. Austin,  
 Maurice E. Viele,  
 W. A. Young,  
 J. P. Sandford,  
 J. Taylor Cooper,  
 Samuel Wilkeson,  
 A. D. Lansing,  
 Thos. Olcott,

J. M. Lovett,  
 James Kidd,  
 G. Y. Lansing,  
 Amasa J. Parker,  
 Ira Harris,  
 Anthony M. Strong,  
 Theodore Townsend,  
 Robert Townsend,  
 Frederick Townsend,  
 Amos Dean,  
 S. B. Woolworth,  
 Alfred B. Street,  
 Philip Ten Eyck,  
 John Tracy,  
 Fred. W. Seward,  
 J. V. P. Quackenbush,

and others.

It will be seen that at this time Messrs. S. Van Rensselaer, John V. L. Pruyn, Howard Townsend, John T. Cooper, and their associates, recognized not only the *power*, but the *duty* of the Trustees to take measures, by the appointment of a competent astronomer, at the Observatory, to prevent a longer continuance of inactivity. It will be seen, too, that they then recognized and urged upon the Trustees the fact that *any further delay* would essentially lessen, if not *entirely destroy*, the success of the Institution; and that they fully appreciated the necessity of immediately mounting the instruments upon which so large an amount of money had been expended; from which so many brilliant results had been guaranteed, and which had been suffered to remain in their packing cases, untouched and neglected. Since that time, up to the dismissal of Dr. Gould, scarcely a step had been taken. The Observatory

had remained, as it then was, inactive. The delay which they then feared would *completely destroy* the success of the Institution, had been continued for six months longer. What, then, can be thought of the "consistency" of those who are now found condemning the very action, which, six months before, they themselves had declared to be vitally essential to the very existence of the Institution?

Acting upon this request, at a meeting of the Trustees on the 9th day of January, 1858, the following resolutions were unanimously adopted:

*Resolved*, That the Board of Trustees of the Dudley Observatory, as legal guardians of the Institution entrusted to their care, must claim an undivided and entire control over its property, the appointment of its officers, and its general policy. But while doing so, they most gratefully recognize the valuable co-operations and advice which they have received from the Scientific Council, and the distinguished Superintendent of the Coast Survey, and will ever receive, with the greatest deference and respect, the suggestions of gentlemen whose names are so illustrious in science, and who are so distinguished in their efforts for its advancement.

*Resolved*, That the Dudley Observatory was founded for the advancement of astronomical science. That, under the advisement of its Scientific Council, superior and very costly instruments have been procured, to secure that object, and that its further endowment will be solicited for that purpose.

*Resolved*, That in obedience to its own convictions of duty and of policy, and in compliance with the expressed wishes of so many of the largest donors to the Dudley Observatory, this Board of Trustees do hereby appoint Dr. C. H. F. Peters, as an Observer in this Institution.

A copy of these resolutions being forwarded to Dr. Peters, that gentleman returned the following reply:

*To Dr. Jas. H. Armsby, Secretary, &c.,*

DEAR SIR: I have the honor of receiving your letter conveying the resolutions of the Board of Trustees of the Dudley Observatory, appointing me Observer; and gratefully accept this sign of confidence, with the assurance that all my efforts hence-

forth, shall be dedicated to the Institution. I hope that by activity and zeal, I may introduce honorably the Observatory into the scientific world, and ever deserve the good esteem and regard of the Trustees.

Very respectfully yours,

C. H. F. PETERS.

*Dudley Observatory, Albany, January 9, 1858.*

Official copies of the resolutions of the Trustees having been forwarded to the members of the Scientific Council, they very promptly made their appearance in Albany.

It was quite obvious, that, so far as regarded the continuance of the relations between the Trustees and the Scientific Council, a crisis in the affairs of the Observatory had now been reached. The Trustees, in following the advice of Gen. Van Rensselaer, J. V. L. Pruyn, J. T. Cooper, and others, and which was in accordance with their own judgment, had appointed their own Observer, and he had signified his acceptance. This step, unless recalled, would, as urged by the Scientific Council, and admitted by all, operate effectually to sever the relation between the Trustees and the Council. The Trustees now occupied a perfectly independent position; a position they had assumed upon mature deliberation, and which they felt able to maintain. Should they have done it, and, if necessary, have sought other scientific associations? And had they done so, what intelligent, fair-minded man, in view of all the facts developed in this history, would have found it in his heart to blame them?

Upon their arrival in the city, the members of the Scientific Council besieged the Trustees, and persistently

and earnestly entreated them to reconsider their action of the ninth of January. They bitterly, and, as the Trustees believed, very unjustly assailed Dr. Peters, both in his private character, as a man of honor, and in his public standing, as a man of science. Their personal influence with the Trustees, and their reputation as scientific men, were brought to bear against the newly appointed Observer. It was represented, to them by the Trustees, that Dr. Gould had greatly exceeded his authority and misunderstood his relations towards the Trustees, in refusing to recognize Dr. Peters as their employee, and demanding from him possession of the Observatory, which they had placed in his keeping. The Council asked for a hearing for Dr. Gould, which was at once granted.

The Trustees then explained distinctly to the Council, that the inactivity of the past eighteen months, after so large an amount had been invested, and so many promises had been made, could no longer be tolerated; and that, unless those to whose advice they were desirous of listening, and who wished to hold positions of honor in the Observatory, could make up their minds to put it in operation, with the means already secured, the relations between them and the Trustees must terminate. The Council pleaded want of time and other engagements in extenuation of Dr. Gould's inaction, and urged the Trustees to appoint him Director, upon the pledge that energy and perseverance in the future should compen-

sate for inertness and neglect in the past. They also urged their own desire to remain the scientific advisers of the Trustees, and this they declared to be impossible in the event of Dr. Peters being retained.

The Trustees, only anxious to promote the best interests of the Institution they had warmed into life, and to the success of which their means and their energies had so long been devoted, hesitated, and deliberated long and earnestly. On the one hand, they felt that in giving up the services of Dr. Peters, they relinquished the aid of a practical astronomer, a devoted lover of his science, and a faithful and diligent Observer. They felt, also, that the sacrifice of a good and accomplished man, to personal jealousies, was scarcely to be justified ; but, on the other hand, they knew, that to adhere to the appointment of Dr. Peters, would bring about the very result that followed the subsequent action of the Board, on the 26th of June. They were then still willing to believe that the counsel of such men as Professors Bache, Pierce and Henry, might be most valuable to the Observatory, if united with capacity and energy on the part of a Director. The confidence they felt in these gentlemen, too, made them even willing to hope that, after all their experience to the contrary, Dr. Gould might prove a man of practical ability, if he should remove to Albany ; and his efforts thereafter be faithfully directed towards the interests of the Observatory.



Some of the members of the Scientific Council, as the Trustees afterwards learned, before meeting with them in council, called upon several of the prominent citizens of Albany, and explained to them their own views in relation to Dr. Peters, Dr. Gould, and the general affairs of the Observatory. This having been done, a meeting of the Trustees was called.

At this meeting, Profs. Henry, Pierce, Bache, and Dr. Gould, severally addressed the Board; Professor Henry in a strain of highly impassioned eloquence; Professor Pierce more coolly and dispassionately, admitting that the power was all in the hands of the Trustees, that the Council was simply advisory, and its continuance, at the pleasure of the Trustees; but claiming that Dr. Gould's agency in procuring the instruments, and the improvements he had made in them, especially the Meridian Circle, ought justly to entitle him to the opportunity of making all the scientific discoveries, anticipated from them.

Dr. Gould's position here was peculiar. To the Scientific Council, about a month previously, he had made his report—so at least the defence informs us—in which he had complained of embarrassments and interference on the part of the Trustees. He now stood in the presence of both parties, and this was obviously not a little embarrassing. He finally concluded to justify himself with the Council, and to attempt to retain a good position with a majority of the Trustees, by endeavoring to place in a false position one of the



latter, with whom he had been upon the most intimate terms. After giving some account of his labors at the Observatory, he commenced his attack upon the Trustee in question, a member of the Executive Committee, admitting that he had no cause of complaint until the preceding June, but alleging that since that time he had suffered annoyances whenever he came to Albany, and that his plans had been constantly interfered with, rendering his bed in Albany "*a bed of thorns.*" As an illustration, he said, the west wing of the Observatory required no enlargement or alteration, and he had so decided; but that when he next came to Albany he was astonished to find the walls of the west wing knocked down, and the whole building left open during the cold weather, and presenting the appearance of a ruin. This "illustration," happened to be most unfortunate, for three reasons: One was, that the west wing was taken down under Dr. Gould's own special directions, to enable him to get in the larger stones for the instruments, and allow the working of the "*Ingenious Crane.*" Another was, that this wall was taken down in August, 1856, and *before the Inauguration.* Still another was, that the west wing was closed up and finished immediately after the stones were placed in position, and before the winter had set in. The east wing, it is true, was kept open longer, on account of the rejection by Dr. Gould of the Lockport stones, and of the delay consequent upon procuring the large stones from Kingston.

Dr. Gould concluded his remarks by pledging himself to *action*, for the future, and to an earnest endeavor to promote *harmony*, and the prosperity of the Institution; and by begging the members of the Board to "give him their votes." Mr. Olcott, in a few remarks, repelled the aspersions of Dr. Gould, vindicated the Trustee from his assaults, and claimed that, if his bed in Albany had been a bed of thorns, he himself must have made it so, for that the homes and hearts of the citizens of Albany had always been open to him, and that their money had been freely expended under his specific directions.

Professor Bache, in a very mild, conciliatory speech, finally signified his acceptance of a previous proposition of Mr. Olcott, that the Observatory should be placed under the immediate charge of Dr. Gould, who should reside at Albany; that the Coast Survey should furnish his services, as also the necessary Observers, free of all expense to the Trustees, except the few hundred dollars necessary for mounting the instruments, and putting them in operation; and that they should be mounted and put in operation without further delay.

Can it be matter of surprise, that some of the Board should have been influenced by such appeals from such men?

But there were some whose vision was not to be dazzled by empty compliments, or deceived by fair promises. There were some whose hearts rebelled against crushing the weak at the bidding of the strong,

and whose clear judgment foresaw danger and difficulties in the future.

The Board met again on the 19th of January to decide upon their course. It is the earnest desire of the Trustees to place this whole history before the public in an unexaggerated and truthful manner. They feel, therefore, that they cannot do better than to introduce here the remarks at this meeting, of their late associate, the deeply lamented John N. Wilder. His voice, so often raised in behalf of the oppressed, now comes to us, as from the sepulchre to which we have just borne him.

It having been determined that the Trustees would accept the proposition of the Scientific Council, and place the Observatory in charge of Dr. Gould; Mr. Wilder addressed the Board in the following language:

MR. PRESIDENT: Before proceeding to decapitate Dr. Peters, and while the statements of gentlemen who are expected to be his successors are so fresh in our memories, I have felt it to be due both to Dr. Peters and to ourselves, that the written opinions of these gentlemen should be compared with their recent verbal statements. I do not expect to influence the action of this Board, My previous inattention to the duties imposed upon its Trustees, should induce me to speak with a becoming modesty. But I feel that the present is a crisis in the history of this Institution; that an able and pure man is about to be sacrificed, and the behests of men strong in the consciousness of position and power, are to be executed upon an individual whose only offence consists in his having most signally fulfilled his duties. I believe all that the gentlemen referred to WROTE in their calmer moments respecting Dr. Peters. To me he bears the genuine marks of a truthful, studious, laborious and eminent Scientist; and the assertion of his manhood and the independence of his action diminish in no degree the respect which I have always felt for him. The summary dismissal of such a man from such a position without a shadow of just reason, seems to be unprecedented and unwarrantable. He is a foreigner; but science knows no Nationality. He is without social support or governmental patronage, but neither

of these will secure the practical service which the Observatory just now so much needs. All admit that he has been faithful, reliable, economical, and successful; and that, in the subordinate position which he has occupied, his bearing has been both deferential and dignified. He has slept at the feet of his instruments. In his own expressive language, "the skies knew him." All that has been well done, up to this time, at the Observatory, so far as I have any knowledge of the scientific operations there, has been done by him; and I repeat, that the gentlemen who appeared before us last Saturday, were not mistaken in the *written* eulogiums which they had previously bestowed upon him.

I must confess, Mr. President, that with these written encomiums then in my pocket, I was astounded when listening to their oral refutation from the same parties. Long since tired of high sounding adjectives, when applied to men in any sphere, I shall not call those gentlemen illustrious, or exalted, or use those superlative forms of adulation which they employed when speaking of themselves, and of each other.

I did suppose them to be men of truth, with solid attainments; men not easily deceived, and who would place too high an estimate on their professional reputation, to be so much mistaken as we find them to have been, in their appreciation of Dr. Peters.

You all remember the intemperate outburst of Dr. Gould when alluding to Dr. Peters, asserting his incompetence, and dealing largely in personal vituperation, all savoring more of the petulance of an irascible and pedantic schoolmaster, than the calm dignity which should distinguish the savan and the scientist. So marked and noticeable was the eruption, that some of his more politic colleagues, by expostulatory waving of their hands and soothing entreaties, calmed him into something like a respectable equanimity.

And yet, this same Dr. Gould, in a letter to a Trustee, dated Cambridge, July 22d, 1856, introducing Dr. Peters, says:

"This is to introduce my friend, Dr. Peters, who will bring it to Albany to-morrow, on his expedition in behalf of the Observatory. It will not be his fault if things do not progress to suit your most earnest aspirations; and he will take immediate measures for drawing the meridian lines, and approximately determinating the latitude. Dr. Peters will, I am sure, find a friend in you, and his amiable character and scientific ability will be sufficient to retain the friendship."

In another letter from Dr. Gould, dated Cambridge, November 10th, 1856, Dr. Gould says of Dr. Peters:

"Were there any American to take his place you should have him; but I do not think there are six men in America, with an understanding of the subject, at all to be compared to his. What men there are, occupy independent positions, with salaries THREEFOLD what poor Peters is receiving."

In another letter Dr. Gould says: "Are we not singularly fortunate in having a man of Dr. Peters' energy of character and scientific ability at the Observatory?"

In a letter to the Trustees, dated June 21st, 1856, he wrote ·



"Doctor Peters is a man who has seen and experienced much, and I think you will like him. Born in Denmark, or rather Schlesswig, a Duchy adjoining Denmark, of which the King of Denmark is the Duke: educated in Prussia, he was for a long time employed in the Geodetical survey of the Neapolitan Kingdom; then in Sicily during the war of the Revolution; after which he resided some years in Constantinople before coming to America. So he has had plenty of experience."

But Dr. Gould's good opinion of Dr. Peters dates even at an earlier period. In the *Christian Examiner* for September, 1849, in his review of Herschel's *Outlines of Astronomy*, he brings to the notice of Sir John Herschel a labored and classic work, written by Dr. Peters, on a comet which he (Dr. Peters) had discovered, and speaks of him in the warmest terms of praise.

It is true, that on the 23d of December, 1857, Dr. Gould wrote as follows to the Scientific Council: "His (Dr. Peters') course towards the *Coast Survey* has been such as to impair my confidence in his trustworthiness; and his subsequent action being illy calculated to restore it, I could with propriety neither urge the Superintendent of that work to permit him to recall his resignation, nor yet incur the responsibility of employing him independently, where his example might exert an influence upon the other assistants belonging to the same corps."

But, only two days after this expression of his lack of faith in the trustworthiness of Dr. Peters, when Dr. Peters was found to be too much of a MAN for Coast Survey purposes, wishing to get rid of this great trial of his faith and patience, and having grace "to bear other people's trials with Christian fortitude," he sent to Dr. Peters a communication, tendering him a position *away from Albany*, at a salary of \$1,200 to \$1,800 a year!

But Dr. Peters liked Albany, and had no wish to leave it. He stated to myself and other gentlemen, that he found here a state of society harmonizing so well with that in which he had been reared; and he had experienced so much kindness from our citizens, and had such regard for their intelligence, hospitality and solidity of character, that he wished to remain here. Opposed as he is to pretence, sham and pedantry, he, at least, could see something in a population eminently disliking such traits, to admire and respect.

Knowing that Dr. Gould's object was only to have him out of his way, Dr. Peters made no reply. On the 5th of January, 1858, Dr. Gould wrote to Dr. Peters, from Cambridge, as follows:

"Having received no reply to my letter of December 25th, offering you a position in the N. W. Boundary Coast Survey, and which offer I have even left open for a week after the publication of your very unfriendly letter to the Albany public, I now write to withdraw it."

That "unfriendly letter," was simply the acknowledgment by Dr. Peters of the kind and friendly expression of regret at his intended departure from Albany, addressed to him by Mrs. Dudley, John V. L. Pruyn, Erastus Corning, Gen. Van Rensselaer, and others.

It seems, Mr. President, that the citizens of Albany, yourself among the number, had the audacity to write, and Dr. Peters the

audacity to answer, without consulting the magnates of the Coast Survey, the communication to which reference has been made, and which caused this indignant retraction by Dr. Gould of an offer which was unsolicited and undesired.

Prof. Pierce, in an earnest and impassioned appeal to the Board, stated his opposition to Dr. Peters to be based purely on scientific grounds ; and, among other things, dwelt at length on Dr. Peters' inability to understand or use the Heliometer. Prof. Pierce, though quite as positive, was more courteous than at least one of his associates ; and perhaps he may be right in differing from Prof. Bache, who in his first letter in regard to the Heliometer, says :

"To render this method at all available for the purpose referred to, the relative position of all the stars in the constellation must be determined ; and Prof. Pierce, Dr. Gould and Dr. PETERS concur with me, that this must be done by triangulation, and recommend for the purpose a Heliometer. If the means to purchase a Heliometer, such as is recommended by Prof. Pierce and Dr. PETERS in the enclosed letters, can be furnished, I will provide, from the Coast Survey instruments, a Transit for time, and furnish an Observer from among the assistants of the work, giving the necessary instructions in a way which is usual in our work. I shall in this have the full and hearty co-operation of Prof. Pierce and Dr. Gould, and the AID of Dr. Peters. The results will belong strictly to the Coast Survey and the Dudley Observatory, and their publication may be made by either."

Here, Prof. Pierce, Dr. Gould and Dr. Peters seem to be made by Prof. Bache a trinity in unity on the Heliometer question. Dr. Gould was not included in the dual number who were to *recommend* the Heliometer, but Dr. Peters was. And with the *aid* of Dr. Peters, and the full and hearty "co-operation" of Prof. Pierce and Gould, the great event proposed by Prof. Bache was to be consummated, through the use of the Heliometer.

Admitting a moiety of what these gentlemen claim for themselves to be true, I think we need feel no loss of self-respect in having appointed Dr. Peters as an Observer in this Institution. They have heretofore, by such and similar expressions, voluntarily placed him on an equality with themselves ; and that elevation should surely satisfy the most sensitive and ambitious. One of them, Dr. Gould, says, in a letter already read, that there are not *six* men in the United States with an understanding of the subject at all to be compared to his, (Dr. Peters'.) *Four* of them, by their own account, must certainly have been present with us during the interview on Saturday. Dr. Peters is the fifth ; and who the sixth may be we are not informed.

I have already detained the Board too long with this exposition. The action about to be taken I believe to be impolitic and erroneous, and fear that we shall yet see many reasons for regretting it. The temptation of professedly gratuitous service has no charms for me ; believing, as I do, that in the end it is generally, if not always, the most costly. I believe in this Board employing the best talent which it can command with the means at its disposal ; and whatever it accomplishes, be it more or less, that it shall control the property of the Institution, and its officers and servants be subject to its authority. The resolutions served upon the



Scientific Council are explicit, and will of course secure *this* result; but I fear that the removal of Dr. Peters, to gratify personal spleen or organized malignity, will not and cannot have a beneficent conclusion.

Dr. March also ably and earnestly addressed the Board in a similar strain.

In consideration of the emphatic promises of Dr. Gould, so strongly endorsed by the Scientific Council, the Board then adopted the following preamble and resolutions:

*Whereas*, this Board did, on January 9, 1858, adopt the following:

*“Resolved*, That the Board of Trustees of the Dudley Observatory, as legal guardians of the Institution entrusted to their care, *must claim an undivided and entire control over its property, the appointment of its officers, and its general policy.* But while doing so, they most gratefully recognize the valuable co-operation and advice which they have received from the Scientific Council, and the distinguished Superintendent of the Coast Survey, and will ever receive, with the greatest deference and respect, the *suggestions* of gentlemen whose names are so illustrious in science, and who are so disinterested in their efforts for its advancement.”

*And whereas*, Professors Bache, Henry, Pierce and Gould were, on the 3d of September, 1855, informally elected *as the Scientific Council* OF THIS BOARD, and have acted as such, rendering valuable service, and in order to give to their appointment the formal sanction of this Board at a regular meeting, therefore

*Resolved*, That we ratify and confirm the election of said persons *as SUCH Scientific Council*, and that we shall at all times be happy to receive from them any *suggestions* which they may deem calculated to advance the object and aims of the Institution.

*Resolved*, That the Board of Trustees ratify the proposition of Mr. Olcott, on behalf of the Trustees, which has been accepted by Prof. Bache, of the U. S. Coast Survey, That the Observatory, under the supervision of the Scientific Council, shall be *immediately placed in operation*, and in charge of Dr. B. A. Gould, Jr., and his assistants, *in the employ and pay of the United States Coast Survey.*

Dr. Peters shortly afterwards removed from the Observatory.

Immediately on Dr. Gould's return to Cambridge, he addressed a letter to Mr. Olcott, in which he charged directly upon one of the Trustees, and that too in an

offensive manner, the authorship of certain paragraphs that had appeared in the public prints reflecting upon the notorious inactivity which had prevailed at the Observatory. Knowing that there was not the slightest foundation for the charge, an answer was returned to Dr. Gould, assuring him that his suspicions were entirely groundless.

Instead of retracting or apologizing, Dr. Gould reiterated the charge, and wrote as follows :

“The results of cautious enquiry as to the promptings of these publications would, I think, surprise you; and though my sources of information are, like those of others, fallible, I fear that you would find my opinion justified, that the correspondent of the *New-York Courier and Enquirer* was instigated by the same person who incited the Editor of the *Statesman*; that this last named Editor is himself the author of the article in the *New-York Express*, whence he copied it; that the offensive piece in the *Atlas and Argus* was published by request from the same quarter. But this is meddling with pitch.”

About the middle of February, Dr. Gould came to Albany, having previously applied to the Board for an appropriation to build a new dome. The original dome had cost \$2,000. A new one would have cost about \$3,000. It would only be needed, if at all, for the Heliameter, the construction of which had not yet been commenced; and which, *when* commenced, it would require several years to finish. The Trustees, therefore, resolved that the construction of a new dome, at such a time, when all available means were required for mounting and bringing into use the instruments already purchased, would be inexpedient. The suspicion would have been at least justifiable, under the circumstances, that the alteration was only desired, in order

to occupy the minds of the Trustees, and thus divert their attention from the delay in mounting the instruments then on hand.

The next meeting of the Board after the appointment of Dr. Gould, was held on the 2d of March. Gen. Van Rensselaer having resigned, Mr. Olcott was elected President.

At this meeting, a communication was presented from Dr. Gould, in which he "recommended" that \$1,500 of the State appropriation of \$2,000, under an act of the Legislature, for determining the longitude of one or more points in the State, should be applied to the purchase of fuel, lights and furniture for the house and office at the Observatory, and for books, stationery, and mounting *a portion* of the instruments. He writes:

"I respectfully ask permission to make use of the State appropriation for *determining the longitude*, in conformity with the foregoing estimates, and that such bills as I may certify for these purposes, be honored to the extent of that appropriation."

He also asked, that authority might be given him to set aside any income that might be derived, during the year, from the use of the Calculating Machine. or "giving time," towards increasing the amounts already mentioned, for furniture, stationery, fuel, lights, &c.

At the same time, Dr. Gould and the other members of the Scientific Council, addressed a letter to the Regents of the University, in which they say:

"In conformity with your request, we have the honor to present to you a concise statement of the reasons why, in our judgment, as already orally communicated to you, the appropriation of two thousand dollars, made by the last Legislature for ascertaining

the true meridian of such important locality or localities as your Board may prescribe, can be rendered most available *for the end desired*, by being assigned to the Dudley Observatory, in order to establish the precise meridian of that Institution."

The application of Dr. Gould for the appropriation of \$2,000 for a new dome, and \$1,500 for furniture, &c., appeared to the Trustees to be scarcely carrying out the arrangement made in January; which was, that the Trustees should be at no expense, except a "few hundred dollars" *then* said to be needed for mounting instruments.

The following resolution was, therefore, introduced, and unanimously adopted:

*Resolved*, That the Treasurer be authorized to pay the expense as estimated by Dr. Gould, in his letter dated January 21, for mounting the Meridian Circle, and the large Transit instrument belonging to the Coast Survey; three hundred dollars to be applied to mounting the former, and one hundred and fifty for mounting the latter; and that Dr. Gould be requested to have both instruments mounted at as early a day as possible.

This resolution having been communicated to Dr. Gould, he wrote in reply as follows:

"When it is borne in mind, that both myself and those of my corps who have *volunteered* to aid in carrying on the Observatory, are compelled to retain and fulfil all our former duties undiminished, in order to secure the means of subsistence,—that the Olcott Meridian Circle is *totally different in character and structure from any ever made*, and that the proper mounting of an instrument of this class with due precaution and accuracy, is among the most difficult and delicate problems of practical astronomy, it will not be deemed unreasonable in me to entreat your patience. The instrument *might* be *rudely placed upon its bearings* in a *few days' time*, but not without impairing its value and future usefulness, by such *harsh treatment*."

It requires but little discernment to discover the sneer involved in this communication. Not "a few days' time," merely, but more than a year and a half

had passed since the period fixed upon by Dr. Gould himself, for mounting both the Circle and the Transit. The very condition upon which he was permitted to take charge of the Observatory, was distinctly stated to be the *immediate* mounting of these neglected instruments. The Trustees saw, with surprise and regret, this early indication of intended delay.

Nor could they perceive the justice of the complaint that the pretended "volunteers" at the Observatory, were compelled to "fulfil their former duties" to secure the "means of subsistence." The Superintendent of the Coast Survey had agreed to furnish from his corps of employees *these very assistants*. They could not, therefore, be regarded in the light of "volunteers." Their position in the Coast Survey was not altered, nor their "means of subsistence" diminished, or interfered with, by their removal to Albany. The letter was regarded as a pretext for still further delay in mounting the instruments.

In the same letter, Dr. Gould asks an appropriation of \$558 for clocks and galvanic batteries.

On the 5th of March, the Executive Committee resolved to hold monthly meetings, and passed a series of financial resolutions, one of which was as follows:

*Resolved*, That every proposed disbursement shall be accompanied by a statement, in writing, of the subject and its estimated cost, and shall be sanctioned by this committee, before any indebtedness whatever shall be incurred in behalf of this Institution.

They also passed resolutions appropriating \$200 for bringing the calculating machine—the "pet" instru-



ment of Dr. Gould—into use; and \$390 for casing the piers in the circle room. Copies of these resolutions were furnished to Dr. Gould.

On the 5th of April, Dr. Gould applied for an appropriation of \$324, for water and fencing, and informed the Board that he had engaged a person to take charge of the premises at \$700 a year salary, and house rent free.

On the 7th of April, the Trustees appropriated \$600 for determining the longitude, and \$324 for water, fence, &c., on Dr. Gould's estimate, and appointed a committee to consider the subject of the appointment of a person to take charge of the buildings and grounds.

On the 30th of May Dr. Gould applied for payment of a balance of about \$200, due for clocks, and for an appropriation of \$110 more for galvanic batteries.

Up to this time, repeated applications had been made to Dr. Gould, for information as to the time when the Trustees might expect the instruments to be mounted and brought into use. The replies had been evasive—sometimes insolent, and never satisfactory. It became painfully evident to the Trustees, that there was no intention on the part of Dr. Gould to put the Observatory in active operation, or even in such a state of forwardness as would furnish a guarantee to the public that the Institution was progressing. They were also pained to learn, from the most reliable sources, that citizens, when visiting the Observatory and grounds, were, in repeated instances, treated with

incivility. Sometimes admission was refused altogether ; and, at other times, when they succeeded in obtaining admission, visitors were received with so little respect or courtesy that they felt themselves at liberty to complain of their treatment. Nor could it be pretended that, *as yet*, anything had been done, or was being done, which would render the presence of respectable visitors either improper or inconvenient. The Trustees felt that it was important to excite and to maintain a popular interest in the Institution, and it was to them a source of mortification, to learn that those who had taken the pains to visit the Observatory premises, had returned with complaints of rude and uncourteous treatment.

Nor was the evidence of this incivility such as the Board could for an instant question or reject. Even the lamented Mr. Wilder, a gentleman whose courteous and modest manners, whose amiable disposition and genial nature furnished a sure guarantee that he would never give to any person, whatever his position, the right or the excuse to insult him, had been treated with insolence. When visiting the Observatory, on one occasion, the door was shut in his face by one of the assistants of Dr. Gould, and he was refused admittance to the Observatory, upon the feigned pretence that Dr. Gould had taken the keys away.

Dr. Armsby and Gen. Pruyn were treated with similar discourtesy. In short, it soon became apparent that those Trustees who, in January, had opposed the

restoration of Dr. Gould, preferring to retain Dr. Peters, were to be made to feel, as often as opportunity should be presented, the active displeasure of the man they had offended.

Official accounts of these interviews were placed before the Executive Committee, on the 22d of May. One was drawn up by Mr. Wilder, and another by Gen. Pruyn. They were both fully endorsed by Dr. Armsby, and are, in substance, as follows :

MR. WILDER'S STATEMENT.—“ On the 19th of May, John N. Wilder and Dr. Armsby visited the Observatory, in the discharge of their duties as members of the Executive Committee. They were told by Dr. Gould's assistants, that the Director was absent, and had taken the keys with him. A few moments before, Dr. Gould was seen at the window of his room. To the question, “ Are there no other keys ? ” they replied “ Yes, but we do not know where they are. ” These replies were made by two of the young men who had just been through the Observatory with a party of visitors. After a few moments, they had an interview with Dr. Gould, who informed them that he had an engagement to dine in the city at five o'clock. It then wanted twenty-five minutes of five, and the Trustees therefore did not detain him. After inspecting the excavations recently made by the New York Central Railroad, on a part of the grounds, which was one object of their visit, they returned by the door of the Observatory, and having seen Mr. Farmer, who was engaged in putting up clocks, pass into the building, with other persons, they said to an assistant who was near by, they would like to go in and see Mr. Farmer. The young man, after some hesitation, ascended the steps before them, and knocked at the door. It was opened, and he stepped in, closing it immediately in their faces, and turned the key. They knocked, and requested him to open the door. It was presently opened by Mr. Farmer, and at the same instant the inner door was closed and locked upon the Trustees ; and although repeated requests were made, they did not obtain admission to the building.

MR. PRUYN'S STATEMENT.—“ A few days subsequent to May last, Robert H. Pruyn and Dr. Armsby, two of the Trustees, visited the Observatory ; Mr. Pruyn for the purpose of discharging a duty imposed upon him by the Trustees, and Dr. Armsby having accompanied him at his request. They called at the house of Dr. Gould, and were informed that all the gentlemen

were at the Observatory. They found a young man in the grounds, and requested admission to the building. This was refused, on the ground that the Director was absent, and he had instructions to admit no person during his absence. He was asked if such instructions extended to Trustees. His reply was, "I do not know, but if you claim to be admitted as Trustees, I suppose I must admit you." He then started towards the house, but loitered in the garden, *and left the Trustees standing upon the steps for from twenty-five to thirty minutes.* The door was then thrown open, and the Trustees entered, but the assistant did not precede them. He remained at the door. They went to the Circle room, and found it fastened. They were informed that the keys of that room, of the Library, and of the Calculating Engine room, were at the house in Dr. Gould's drawer, from which he did not wish any one to take them in his absence. Mr. Pruyn said he did not wish him to do so, and that he would visit those rooms some other time when Dr. Gould was present. On leaving the Observatory, Mr. Pruyn, solely for the purpose of endeavoring to preserve the relations between Dr. Gould and the Trustees, which he had been greatly instrumental in perfecting in the preceding January, remarked: "Mr. Winslow, as you will see Dr. Gould before I do; and as you appear to be doubtful whether your instructions forbid the admission of Trustees during Dr. Gould's absence, you had better get instructions on that point, as other Trustees may soon visit you." The reply was, "I do not think there would be any difficulty, if application is made in the right way;" and then he added, "if you had shown the courtesy of asking for the Director, you would have been admitted." Mr. Pruyn then said, "Mr. Winslow, it does not become you to use such language." We were informed at the house, that all the gentlemen were at the Observatory.

The Trustees did not feel inclined to question the veracity of these gentlemen; nor did they consider them as persons likely to *imagine* insults that were not *intended*, or to exact any politeness or attention that was not strictly their due. They were willing, however, to do all in their power to avoid these difficulties, and promote the prosperity of the Institution. This was now felt to be impossible, unless distinct and definite rules were adopted, by which the conduct of all per-



sons in charge at the Observatory could be regulated and their duties properly defined.

The reasons that rendered such rules necessary were well known to Dr. Gould. He certainly must have been aware of the improper treatment of the Trustees, unless we are to suppose that no communication ever took place between him and his associates. Indeed, the Trustees are reliably informed, that Dr. Gould has since avowed, that in respect to one Trustee, at least, the insult was intentional. Repeated applications had been made to him for information as to the probable period when the mounting of the instruments, according to the promises made nearly five months previously, would be undertaken. That Dr. Gould was ignorant at the time of the meeting of the Board of Trustees, on the 22d of May, of these grounds of complaint, as he has since pretended, is scarcely within the bounds of reasonable belief.

On the 22d of May, the Executive Committee, consisting of nine of the Trustees, unanimously adopted the following resolutions :

*Resolved*, That the grounds of the Observatory be open to the public, between the hours of seven o'clock A. M., and seven o'clock P. M., except Sundays ; children not to be admitted, unless accompanied by parents, or some person of mature age.

*Resolved*, That a committee of the Trustees, consisting of Mr. Pruyn, Mr. Wilder, Mr. Rathbone and Mr. Vosburgh, *in connection with Dr. Gould*, be appointed to prepare such rules and regulations for the admission of visitors to the Observatory building, as shall make the same as accessible to the public, *as is consistent with the safety of the instruments and the prosecution of the work of the Observatory*. The same to be published for the information of the public.



*Resolved*, That the Treasurer be directed to procure such and so many duplicate keys to the Observatory, and its several rooms, as may from time to time be necessary; and that Dr. Gould be requested to place one set of such keys in the dwelling-house attached to the Observatory, for the sole and exclusive use of the Trustees; so that at any and all hours, any of the Trustees visiting the Observatory, with or without friends, may not be prevented from having access to the Observatory and all its rooms.

*Resolved*, That Dr. Gould be officially requested, through the Secretary of this Board, to instruct the boys and young men who, as employees of the Coast Survey, are under his direction, that the Institution was endowed to a great extent through the efforts, and by the munificence of private individuals, residing in this city; that the labor of securing the construction of its buildings, and their present equipments, has principally been performed here, and that it is largely dependant upon the friends of astronomical science in this vicinity for its future progress and usefulness. And that hereafter the Board of Trustees will require for themselves, personally, and for all persons visiting the Observatory with proper intentions, the candor, courtesy and civility everywhere essential, but especially so in an Institution which originated in the most generous and disinterested intentions, and which can only accomplish the work of its founders, by securing, in every legitimate way, and so deserving, the popular favor and support.

*Resolved*, That the bills of Mr. Farmer and Mr. Polsey, be referred to the Sub-Committee on Accounts, of which Mr. Rathbone is Chairman.

It is proper here to state, that the third resolution of this series was intended as a rebuke to Dr. Gould, for what was deemed a studied insult, upon his part, through those in his employ, to some of the Trustees.

The Trustees rarely visited the Observatory, except on business connected with their official duty, or for the purpose of introducing it to the attention of some friend, whose favor and aid they wished to secure. It is submitted to a candid public to say, whether it was unreasonable, after what had already occurred, that the Trustees should take measures to secure to themselves free admission to the Observatory premises, without

subjecting themselves to the risk of a repetition of the insolence of irresponsible subordinates, whom Dr. Gould, for his own purposes, might see fit to harbor there. Dr. Gould was associated with the Committee charged with the preparation of rules in relation to the admission of visitors, with a view to enable him to suggest such restrictions and regulations as he should deem expedient or proper.

The fourth resolution seemed to be called for by the circumstances which have already been noticed. Some action was deemed necessary, to prevent the recurrence of similar improprieties and misconduct. To decline all notice of the facts which had been brought to the attention of the Committee, would have been to discredit the statements, or censure the conduct of such gentlemen as John N. Wilder, Gen. Pruyn, Dr. Armsby, and other citizens of equal respectability. If *their* testimony was reliable, the necessity for such action was most urgent.

Dr. Gould replied to these resolutions, in a long letter, dated the 31st of May. That letter has been designated by one member of this Board as arrogant, insolent, and unbecoming the position held by Dr. Gould, and his relation to the Trustees. This opinion has been adopted as the judgment of this Board, and that judgment is now reiterated. Occupying a position which he had but just obtained at the hands of the Trustees, and that, too, not without the most humiliating importunity, he now *puts on airs*, and assumes to teach the

Executive Committee and the Trustees, what belongs to them, and in what manner they should discharge their duty. He reviews and condemns their action, and finally refuses to submit to their requirements. But let him speak for himself. Thus he writes :

“I will take the liberty of recalling to your memory the position of the Scientific Council of the Observatory, and the circumstances under which they are endeavoring to bring it into full activity. When notified that all the available means had been consumed under the auspices of the former Executive Committee, and that the Observatory would, for some years, be entirely destitute of income, they did not desert it ; and the undersigned, being determined that no additional sacrifice necessary to insure its success, should be wanting on his part, removed to this city, where, aided by the generous zeal of a corps of assistants, most of whom are contributing gratuitous labor—offered for the sake and for the love of science—he has been conducting the preliminary operations to the best of his ability ; advancing the requisite means from his private resources, and without support thus far from you, despite the promise that the balance of the State appropriation for longitude should be placed at his disposal, towards defraying the unavoidable expenses of carrying on the Observatory. He claims that he is at least entitled to be protected from interruptions which, if permitted, will render his labors nugatory.”

This document deserves some attention. Its real character, like that of its author, is somewhat obscured by grandiloquent phrases and rhetorical flourishes.. It has the air and seeming of a “veto” message. The paper was obviously designed for effect *outside* of the Board of Trustees. Dr. Gould proposes, in the outset, to refresh the recollection of the Trustees in relation to the “position of the Scientific Council,” and the circumstances under which they were endeavoring to bring the Observatory into full activity. But this, after all, he entirely fails to do. What there was in the “position”

or "circumstances," of the Scientific Council, which he would have the Trustees remember, must be left to conjecture.

Dr. Gould then proceeds to state, in terms, which, in view of his relation to the Trustees, can be but regarded as extremely offensive, that "all the available means of the Observatory had been *consumed, under the auspices of the former executive committee.*" No one knew better than Dr. Gould, the disingenuousness, to use the mildest term suited to the facts, of this statement. From the time Professor Mitchell magnanimously yielded his position in the Observatory to Dr. Gould, until the hour when this remarkable letter was written, not a dollar of the Observatory funds had been "*consumed,*" except "*under the auspices*" of Dr. Gould. The amount thus expended, according to the books of the Treasurer, from the 29th of August, 1856, to the 10th of August, 1858, is \$60,676.83. This sum includes \$7,000 advanced to Mr. Spencer, on account of the Heliometer, which is not yet begun; but is exclusive of outstanding and unpaid bills, to the amount, as believed, of about \$4,000.

Prior to the first of August, 1856, there had been expended, in the erection of the buildings contemplated by Professor Mitchell, the sum of \$22,449.98. Less than \$500 more was required to complete the buildings according to his plan; and yet, within the last two years, *more than* \$40,000 have been "*consumed,*" upon the Observatory premises, "*under the auspices*" of Dr.



Gould, exclusive of the sums that have been paid for Observatory instruments.

It is proper here to state, that in addition to this enormous expenditure, a very large proportion of which has, so far as any useful purpose is concerned, been really *wasted*, Dr. Gould, upon his own responsibility, and without the knowledge of the Trustees, but at their expense, had procured plans and specifications of other buildings and erections, which could only be executed, at a cost ranging from \$100,000 to \$200,000.

Dr. Gould next proceeds to invite the attention of the Trustees to the fact, that, though notified that all the available means of the Observatory had been *consumed*, so that for some years it would be destitute of income, still the Scientific Council "did not desert it." Such a statement, with all the facts fresh in the recollection of the Trustees, and of Dr. Gould himself, could only have been made for the effect it might have elsewhere, in the conflict which he then meditated. It is true, that, when the Scientific Council learned that they were about to lose the hold they had upon the Observatory, and that the Trustees had resolved to terminate the relations which had existed between the Scientific Council and the Observatory, the entire Council, alarmed at the prospect, "hastened" to Albany, and by their promises and entreaties, induced a majority of the Board of Trustees to change their purpose, and to reinstate them. This struggle to retain their grasp upon the Observatory, against the wishes and purposes of the



Trustees—a struggle which has been continued up to this hour—Dr. Gould has the effrontery to present to the Trustees themselves, as a reason why still further concessions should be made.

There are other statements in this message of Dr. Gould—such as the allegation that he had been advancing from his own private resources the means of conducting certain preliminary operations, to which he alludes, but of which the Trustees have no knowledge—which a proper regard for accuracy would have induced him either to omit altogether, or very essentially to qualify. But this notice must suffice.

It now became apparent that the affairs of the Observatory were rapidly approaching a crisis. From the time of the arrival of Dr. Gould at Albany, after he had been reinstated in January, his intercourse with the Trustees had been of the most formal and ceremonious character. The humiliating struggle which it had cost him to retain his position, was not forgotten. Towards those of the Trustees who had, to the last, advocated the appointment of Dr. Peters, he was especially vindictive. He spoke of them, on various occasions, in terms of ridicule and reproach. The treatment which some of these gentlemen received when visiting the Observatory grounds, showed, too, how deeply his youthful subordinates had been imbued with the sentiments of their principal. In short, instead of adopting and pursuing a spirit of conciliation, and endeavoring to secure harmony of action

between himself and all the members of the Board, so all might work together for the advancement of a common interest, he seemed, from the beginning, to have adopted the "rule or ruin" policy, and to make those members of the Board who had ventured to question the wisdom of his administration of the affairs of the Observatory, to realize what it is to offend *such a man*.

It soon became apparent, too, after Dr. Gould had taken up his residence in Albany, that, as a part of his policy and with a view to the exigencies which have now come upon him, he determined upon raising up for himself and the Scientific Council, a party of friends and adherents, *outside* of the Board of Trustees, and those who, with them, had been the constant friends of the Observatory, among citizens, respectable and influential in their sphere, but who, from the beginning, had stood aloof from the Observatory enterprise. Of the success of this branch of his policy, the public need not be informed. The "Address" which has recently appeared, and to which twelve gentlemen have allowed their names to be appended, furnishes the strongest evidence of the skill with which he has managed this part of his scheme, and of the surprising credulity with which these citizens, themselves ignorant of the true state of the case, have adopted and endorsed the perversions and misrepresentations of Dr. Gould, and thrust themselves into the controversy.

It is only in this connection, that the Trustees regard the "Address" as worthy of attention. As might be

expected from its origin, it is a partizan paper, and abounds with denunciation and severe epithets against the Trustees, and is liberal in its panegyrics upon Dr. Gould and the Scientific Council, but the honest inquirer will find in it nothing to aid him in his search after truth.

On the 4th of June, a full meeting of the Board of Trustees was held, and a report from the Executive Committee was presented. The committee, after setting forth the business transacted at their several meetings, the amounts appropriated for the work at the Observatory, and other business matters connected with their duties, say:

“The committee have endeavored to do everything in their power to gratify the wishes and carry out the views of Dr. Gould. They have not hesitated to make, promptly, every appropriation that seemed essential or necessary to the successful prosecution of the work of the Observatory. Members of the committee have visited the Observatory at different times; have conferred with Dr. Gould relative to the progress of the work, and could have learned what obstacles, if any, have been thrown in the way of its progress. Yet they have heard from numerous sources, of constant and reiterated complaints made by Dr. Gould and his friends, against the Trustees. The committee are not aware of any omission of duty on their part, or of any foundation for these reports. The work done by Dr. Gould for the Observatory, since it was put under his charge, in January last, consists in cutting the holes in the two circle piers, for mounting the instruments. This has, doubtless, been a very difficult and laborious work. Preparations have also been made for clothing the piers, when the holes are completed. Dr. Gould has also improved the grounds, by laying out walks, planting trees, changing the fences around the new house, &c.

This work the committee had regarded as belonging more appropriately to the Trustees, in connection with Dr. Gould; and they had hoped that Dr. Gould would devote his time and best energies to bringing the Observatory and the instruments into immediate operation.

But, as yet, no steps have been taken towards mounting the

Transit instrument in the west wing. This room has been finished, and this splendid instrument has lain idle in its box, since November, 1856.

They had hoped that this instrument would have been mounted, and employed in determining the longitude, instead of the small instrument, for which a temporary building has been, without any proper authority, erected.

The committee believe that they have performed with fidelity and candor, the duties entrusted to them by the Board ; but they do not feel authorised, without the sanction of the Board, to make any further appropriations, except for purposes purely scientific.

The committee are pained to be under the necessity of stating that certain Trustees of the Institution, and members of this committee, have been treated with marked rudeness and incivility by Dr. Gould's assistants ; that they have been refused admission to the Observatory building ; that they have received uncivil, evasive and untruthful answers to questions addressed to the young men in regard to the keys, the absence of Dr. Gould, and on other points."

The Executive Committee also presented to the Board the statements by Messrs. Wilder and Pruyn and Dr. Armsby, of their visits to the Observatory, and of the insults to which they were subjected, and also the resolutions adopted by the Executive Committee on the 22d day of May.

The report of the Executive Committee was adopted by a unanimous vote of the Board.

The question then arose, what should be done, in view of the extraordinary state of facts presented by the report. This question became the subject of grave and earnest consideration. Much discussion ensued. All were agreed in deploring and condemning the conduct of Dr. Gould. But in relation to the line of action which should be adopted by the Board, there was some diversity of opinion. At length, with a view to harmony and unanimity, a resolution was proposed, which



seemed satisfactory to all, and which was ultimately adopted, without a dissenting voice. It is as follows:

*Resolved*, That the constantly recurring difficulties which this Board has experienced in the affairs of the Dudley Observatory, arising from want of harmony between Dr. Gould and the members of this Board, have satisfied the Board that some new arrangement is absolutely necessary, and that the President be requested to communicate these facts to the Scientific Council.

The resolution, thus adopted, was transmitted by the President to the Scientific Council, with the following letter:

ALBANY, June 5, 1858.

PROF. A. D. BACHE—*Dear Sir*: At a meeting of the Trustees of the Dudley Observatory, held last evening, the enclosed resolution was unanimously adopted.

In forwarding the same to you, agreeably to instructions, though candor compels me to acknowledge my personal gratification in the passage of the same, yet with equal candor, I can say for myself and my associates, that the necessity which impelled our action, was the occasion of painful regrets.

Looking with confidence and pleasure to the continued friendly co-operation of the other members of our Scientific Council,

I have the honor to be,

With undiminished regard,

Your obedient,

THOS. W. OLCOTT.

By this resolution, thus transmitted to the Scientific Council, they were apprised that there was a "want of harmony" between Dr. Gould and the members of the Board. They were told of "difficulties," not slight or temporary, but serious and "constantly recurring." And, finally, they were informed, in terms too plain to be misinterpreted, that the relations between Dr. Gould and the Board must terminate—that "some new arrangement was absolutely necessary."



The President, in communicating this resolution, took occasion to express, in courteous and soothing terms, the wish, no doubt sincerely entertained by himself and many others, that, though a separation from Dr. Gould was now inevitable, the Observatory might yet co-operate with the *other* members of the Scientific Council.

The reply of these gentlemen, which was received on the 17th of June, affects to regard this resolution and the letter of the President, as an appeal to them. They would have it understood that all that the Trustees had done, or, indeed, could do, was to prefer to them, as the ultimate arbiters in the case, their charges and complaints, and that they, at their convenience and in their own way, were to decide the controversy between the conflicting parties. They accordingly, after repeating with evident relish, the complimentary terms with which the President had closed his letter, and indulging in a formal expression of regret that the Trustees should have felt it necessary to adopt such a resolution, proceed, benignantly, to commend the Trustees for having had the consideration to appeal to them. They then speak, in stately measure, of their own responsibility "before the public," and the "binding character of the arrangement between themselves and the Trustees." The document was artfully conceived; but its whole tenor was such as to convince the Trustees that these gentlemen were prepared to assert their right to reverse the decision of the Trustees, and insist, against their will, if necessary, that Dr. Gould should be retained.

Subsequent events have abundantly proved that the Trustees did not misinterpret their purpose.

A meeting of the Trustees was convened on the 20th of June. The communication of Professor Bache and his associates, was laid before the Board by the President. A free discussion and interchange of views was had among the members. Four members of the Board, among whom were two of the most steadfast friends and liberal patrons of the Observatory, while they distinctly disavowed any intention to justify or palliate the conduct of Dr. Gould, were inclined to more pacific and gentle measures; but a large majority, believing that the interests, and even that the life of the institution were involved in the question, were unwilling that the scenes of January should be re-enacted. They thought it better that the Scientific Council should at once be made to understand, if the resolution which had already been adopted was not sufficiently explicit upon that point, that the determination of the Trustees to rid themselves of Dr. Gould was unalterable. They believed then, and they still believe, that this course was dictated by sound policy. The question was one which they had both a legal and a moral right to determine for themselves. The facts upon which their action was founded, were within their own personal knowledge. They could neither be successfully gainsayed or refuted. They could not then, nor can they now see any possible advantage to be derived from confronting Dr. Gould before his associates, who had, before, been found so ready

to become his champions, and since, have for his sake, made themselves principals in the conflict he is waging against the Trustees, for the possession and control of the Observatory. It is quite obvious now, however it may have been then, that nothing which the Trustees could have said or done—no facts or grounds of complaint, however strong or well founded, could have induced the gentlemen who were so anxious to take jurisdiction of the controversy, to concur with the Trustees in the removal of Dr. Gould. Upon every consideration, the Trustees thought it more wise that the associates of Dr. Gould should at once and distinctly be informed, that the question whether, under any circumstances or upon any conditions, Dr. Gould should longer be retained, could not be deemed open for consideration.

The following resolutions were accordingly proposed and adopted, with only four dissenting voices :

A communication having been read to the Board, by the President, in relation to the existing difficulties with Dr. Gould, therefore,

*Resolved*, That this Board approve of such communication, and that a copy be transmitted to the Scientific Council, as expressive of the views of this Board, on the subject to which it relates.

And a resolution having been adopted, at the last meeting of this Board, in which, after referring to the want of harmony between Dr. Gould and the members of the Board, it was declared, as the sense of the Board, that some new arrangement in the affairs of the Observatory was absolutely necessary—which resolution, in pursuance of the request of the Board, was communicated to the Scientific Council, by the President of the Board ;

And the Scientific Council in their reply to this communication, bearing date the 12th of June, instant, having requested that they be furnished with a statement of the difficulties referred to in the resolution of the Board, with such facts as may bear upon them, and especially a copy of the record of the proceedings of the

Executive Committee, and of the Trustees since the first of the present year;

*And whereas*, The Scientific Council have *apparently* misunderstood the *purpose* and *determination* of the Board in adopting the resolution to which they refer; Now, therefore,

*Resolved*, That this Board do not recognize the right of the Scientific Council to *review* the action of this Board with reference to the matter in question; and as a compliance with their request could only be useful to the Scientific Council in determining whether Dr. Gould should longer be continued in the service of the Observatory, which this Board regard as a question no longer open for consideration, they deem it inexpedient to comply with the request of the Scientific Council in this behalf.

*And whereas*, The Scientific Council have, in their said communication further requested that the Trustees would suggest the new arrangement contemplated by their resolution, therefore

*Resolved*, That the Scientific Council be informed that the new arrangement contemplated by this Board, involves the immediate withdrawal of Dr. Gould.

*Resolved*, Also, in view of the unpleasant relations which now exist between Dr. Gould and the members of this Board, that it is not desirable or expedient that he should longer continue to be a member of the Scientific Council, and that hereafter he will not be recognized as such member.

The communication to which the first of this series of resolutions relates, contains a clear and truthful statement of the principal grounds of complaint against Dr. Gould. It is already before the public.

Two days after the adoption and publication of these resolutions, a letter purporting to emanate, from and bearing the signature of Mrs. Dudley, found its way into the public prints. It reads as follows :

ALBANY, June 28th, 1858.

*To the Trustees of the Dudley Observatory:*

GENTLEMEN—I am surprised and grieved to learn, through the medium of the public press, that serious difficulties have arisen between yourselves and the Director of the Dudley Observatory; and that you demand the withdrawal of the Director, and refuse to refer the difficulties in question to the Scientific Council, except upon the basis of the removal of one of their own body, to whom the management of the Observatory has been entrusted.



It is well known to you that my large donation was made under the express condition that the Observatory should become a National Institution, dedicated to the advancement of one of the noblest branches of science, and that the eminent gentlemen composing the Scientific Council, should be entrusted with its development and management. I relied upon the gentlemen who have been named as Trustees, in the original act of incorporation, passed several years before, to co-operate harmoniously with the Council, and have never sought to interfere with your action, so long as it appeared to be directed towards the great objects to which the Observatory is dedicated.

Having undiminished confidence in the intentions and ability of the Council to accomplish the ends proposed, I cannot but feel the most earnest desire that every member of it shall receive the hearty co-operation and support of the Trustees, without which all our efforts must fail. Learning that the action of your Board, which I refer to, is not unanimous, I have now respectfully to request that those members of it who cannot cordially continue to discharge the duties which devolve upon them in connection with the Scientific Council, as at present organized, and with the Director now in charge, shall resign, and leave their places to be filled by such donors to the Observatory as may be selected by the remaining Trustees.

The disinterested zeal for the cause of science, which has prompted you to undertake the labors and responsibilities which have devolved upon you, will, I trust, lead any of you without hesitation to withdraw from the control of the Observatory, rather than hazard its success by placing it beyond the supervision of those gentlemen whose names have been the guaranty to most of the other large contributors to the Observatory, as well as to myself.

I am, Gentlemen,

With much respect,

Your obedient servant,

BLANDINA DUDLEY.

In respect to the real authorship of this letter, it is not too much to say that no two persons residing in Albany, and at all familiar with this controversy, can differ in opinion. No one, not even Dr. Gould himself, will say that it was written or even dictated by Mrs. Dudley. In Albany, where all the circumstances are known, the letter is harmless. The Defenders of Dr. Gould in their published "Defence," have had too much



self-respect even to allude to it. The man who dared to invade the seclusion of this aged lady, and obtain her signature to this paper, uncomprehended and incomprehensible, as it was, by her, is guilty of *moral forgery*. No measure of condemnation or contempt is adequate properly to characterize such an act. And yet this was done—done, too, by a prominent party to this controversy—done with the most unworthy motives—not with any hope of influencing the action of the Trustees, but for the purpose of exciting prejudice against them where the facts are not and cannot well be known.

Fully aware of all these circumstances, and of the *moral fraud* which had been practiced upon this excellent and venerable lady; and knowing, too, as they did full well, how totally unfamiliar she was with all the facts which enter into this controversy, the Trustees, nevertheless, thought it expedient to reply to the letter, as though she had been its author, in kind and courteous terms. The reply is as follows:

MRS. BLANDINA DUDLEY—Dear Madam: We have received your letter of the 28th inst. At the time of your noble gift, the Trustees of the Dudley Observatory probably impressed you with sanguine hopes, inspired by the assurances of the distinguished gentlemen who composed our Scientific Council.

We flattered ourselves with harmonious action and auspicious results. But a bitter experience, to which you are a stranger, forbids all hope of our continuing to act with all the gentlemen who compose our Scientific Council. We venerate, dear Madam, your age, we admire your liberality, we rejoice that your honored name is identified with an Institution which is destined, we trust, to shed lustre not only upon its name, but on our country and the world.

And we doubt not that, could we condescend to intrude upon the sanctity of your retirement, in the unworthy endeavor of enlisting your feelings and distressing your mind by a conflict in which

men alone should be engaged, we could spread before you the facts which would convince you of the propriety of our course, and secure for it your cordial approbation.

The action taken by us has been the result of a painful necessity, and we see no reason for regretting or retracting it.

We have endeavored honestly, and to the best of our ability, to perform the duties imposed upon us as members of the Board of Trustees, and cannot now relinquish the trust committed to us, without danger to the Observatory and dishonor to ourselves.

Fully aware of the influences which induced you to make the communication above referred to, and believing that, in the future, you will sanction the course we have pursued, and which we know to have been necessary.

We remain, with respect and sincere regard,

Truly yours,

THOMAS W. OLCOTT,  
JOHN F. RATHBONE,  
JOHN N. WILDER,  
S. H. RANSOM,  
W. H. DEWITT,  
I. W. VOSBURGH,  
IRA HARRIS,  
ALDEN MARCH,  
J. H. ARMSBY,  
R. H. PRUYN.

On the 30th of June—two days after the Dudley letter had been issued—for these were stirring times with Dr. Gould and his associates—it was reported that all the members of the Scientific Council were at the Observatory. They did not, as on former occasions, apprise their friends in the Board of their arrival; nor did they, as they had been accustomed to do, avail themselves of their hospitalities. It was evident, from the beginning, that they had hastened to Albany for the purpose of sustaining their associate. He, not the Trustees, had appealed to them, and they had resolved not to desert him in his hour of need. For this, they deserve his gratitude. His case was one of emergency,

and great emergencies require extreme measures. These were the men for such an occasion. Long accustomed to "loyalty" and unquestioning submission, they had the courage to assume attitudes which, to men of more modesty and less confidence in their ability to execute their own arbitrary will, would have been quite startling.

They prepared the way for what was to follow, by boldly and unscrupulously asserting, in a pompous show of swelling words, their own unlimited jurisdiction. Let them speak for themselves. The following is the preamble which precedes the resolutions, adopted upon their first assembling at the Observatory, containing their declaration of rights:

*Whereas*, The Scientific Council, induced by the urgent representations and repeated assurances of the Trustees, have assumed the responsibility of the scientific conduct of the Observatory, and publicly pledged their reputations for its scientific success; and whereas the Trustees have raised large sums of money for the support of the Observatory by the use of these pledges; and whereas the Trustees must necessarily have delegated to the Scientific Council all the powers which are essential to the assumption of this responsibility and the performance of the duties in which their pledges have involved them; and whereas the Director of the Observatory is the agent of the Scientific Council for the scientific conduct of the Observatory, &c.

It has been said that *power* is ever at war with its own boundaries. The great want of the Scientific Council, in the emergency in which they found themselves, was power. It had not been conferred upon them, and yet they must have it. They had no alternative but to do, as has often before been done by tyrants, *usurp* it. This they at once proceeded to do.

The high-sounding phrases with which this preamble abounds, such as "urgent representations," and "repeated assurances" of the Trustees, "assuming the responsibility of the scientific conduct of the Observatory"—"their reputations publicly pledged"—"power *necessarily* delegated"—"power essential to the assumption of this responsibility"—"power essential to the performance of the duties which their pledges involved;" these were brought into service, not because they meant anything of themselves, or were pertinent to the relation in which these gentlemen stood to the Trustees, but the better to conceal their real design, which was, to *clothe themselves* with all the authority the exigency of the case required.

When they had last been in Albany, in their anxiety to retain even a slight footing in the Observatory, they were satisfied, and even grateful, that the Trustees, by a reluctant vote, should so far yield to their earnest *beseachings*, as formally to appoint them their Scientific Council, at the same time declaring, as the measure of their authority, that the Board would "at all times be happy to receive from them any *suggestions* which they might deem calculated to advance the object and views of the institution."

Now, they proceed at once to *resolve*, "That it is not consistent with the obligations by which the Trustees have bound themselves to the Scientific Council, to the donors and to the public, for the Trustees to *appoint* or



remove, the Director of the Observatory, *without the concurrence of the Scientific Council.*"

It may be useful to pause here for a moment, and consider the full scope and import of the resolution. It speaks of obligations—obligations of the Trustees—obligations self-imposed—by which the Trustees have *bound* themselves to the Scientific Council. It speaks of a solemn compact by which the Trustees had surrendered to these gentlemen a very essential part of the power delegated to them by the Legislature. The inquirer after truth will be amazed to know that the only foundation upon which these arrogant pretensions are based, is contained in the resolution of the 19th of January, which has already been noticed.

But, upon a second glance at their resolution, it will be seen that, after all, these men do not mean to say that the Trustees have bound themselves to them by any *legal* obligation. For they associate themselves in these obligations, with the donors and the public. They only mean to speak in general terms of the *moral* duty which the Trustees, in their official capacity, owe to those three great classes of mankind—the *Scientific Council*—the *donors*—and the *public*. The resolution then comes to this; that, in the judgment of this august body, the Trustees *ought not* to have the power, and, therefore, they *have not* the power "to appoint or remove the Director—not *any* Director—but *the present*



Director, Dr. Gould, without the concurrence of the Scientific Council."

Thus, these eminent men, at the very outset, in this, their first official session, invented a plan by which they could save their friend. It was *ingenious*. Few men could have conceived it—fewer still would have dared to promulgate it—and none, but the Scientific Council, would have ventured upon its execution. That these men could ever be brought to *concur* in the removal of Dr. Gould, no one will believe. In the very beginning of their "Defence," they say their errand to Albany was, after ascertaining how much blame was due to each party, to "suggest" rules for the *government* of both—the Trustees and Dr. Gould)—in their subsequent intercourse."

Having thus adjudged the question for themselves, and decided that Dr. Gould could not be displaced without their concurrence, the Scientific Council next proceeded, in an equally summary manner, to dispose of the recent action of the Board in relation to the management of the Observatory premises. With great unanimity—for the report of these proceedings affirms that all the resolutions were *unanimously* adopted—they proceeded, in their second resolution, to declare "that no rules or resolutions which affected the scientific operations of the Observatory, ought to be adopted, *without the sanction of the Scientific Council*." Whether or not any rule or resolution would affect the scientific operations of the Observatory, would, of course, be a question

which scientific men alone could decide. The Trustees, therefore, could really do nothing without the permission of this mysterious body. Thus, they assumed to declare the rights and powers of the Trustees, and to make them in all respects, subordinate to themselves.

It cannot be amiss, here, again, to notice the unequalled assurance which gave character to these proceedings. These men refer to no resolution, or other action of the Trustees, conferring upon them any such authority as they chose to exercise. They would scarcely be willing to refer their power to any such ignoble origin. From the tenor of their preamble and resolutions, they would seem rather to refer it, generally, to "the fitness of things." The Trustees certainly could not be allowed to exercise such powers; and as there was no one else so well qualified, it was fit and proper that they should be exercised by the Scientific Council!

They had now settled the relations between themselves and the Trustees. They had so restricted the powers of the Trustees as to make them a very harmless body. Having thus declared the principles by which they are to be governed, they are prepared to proceed more directly to the consideration of the case in hand.

They begin, by affirming that Dr. Gould is *their agent*, and not *an officer* of the Observatory. This being so, it seems to follow, very logically, that, if charges are to be preferred against him, the Scientific Council alone

could entertain them. Upon one point, these gentlemen do not seem to be quite settled in their own judgment. Their third resolution declares "that in any case of charges against the Director, the Scientific Council should have, at least *concurrent*, if not *exclusive* jurisdiction." So that, really, here is a grave question left open for future consideration. It is, whether, in case of charges made against the Director, the jurisdiction of the Scientific Council to try him is *exclusive*, or only *concurrent* with some other jurisdiction. It is matter of some surprise, that men of such transcendent wisdom, should have hesitated in determining such a question, especially, when, according to their views of things, there could be no appeal from their judgment.

Having thus adjudged themselves to be the only proper tribunal to try Dr. Gould, they resolve to proceed. They declare in their fourth resolution, "that in accordance with their convictions of duty, they will proceed with a full investigation of all the charges brought by Mr. Olcott against Dr. Gould; and that Mr. Olcott be requested to furnish any oral or written evidence, which he may possess, in support of his allegations." A fifth resolution was adopted, directing that *proclamation* be duly made that this great tribunal was now open, and ready to proceed to business. The resolution is as follows:

"That the Board of Trustees be informed that the Scientific Council *is now in session*, and will be happy to receive any communications from them."

The following correspondence then ensued between

the Scientific Council and Mr. Olcott, the President of the Board of Trustees:

[From the Scientific Council to Mr. Olcott.]

DUDLEY OBSERVATORY, June 30, 1858.

T. W. OLCOTT, Esq.:

Dear Sir—We have received a communication from Dr. J. H. Armsby, Secretary of the Board of Trustees, of the Dudley Observatory, purporting to contain remarks made by you at a recent meeting of the Board, in which are certain grave allegations against the scientific and moral character of Dr. Gould, the Director of the Observatory.

We address you now, to ask for any oral or written evidence which you may possess, in support of your very serious charges.

We shall be in session at the Observatory to-morrow (Thursday) morning, at nine o'clock, and hope it may suit your convenience to communicate with us, at or previous to that time.

Very respectfully yours,

JOSEPH HENRY,  
A. D. BACHE,  
BENJAMIN PIERCE.

[Reply from Mr. Olcott.]

ALBANY, June 30, 1858.

*Professors HENRY, BACHE and PIERCE:*

Gentlemen—Unwilling to treat your communication of this date with a silence which might be construed into disrespect, allow me to say that, with the most profound regards for you individually, and for the exalted positions which you occupy, I feel constrained to state that I cannot recognize your honorable body as an appellate tribunal, and therefore must decline to obey your summons.

Very respectfully yours,

THOMAS W. OLCOTT.

[Letter from the Scientific Council to the Trustees of the Dudley Observatory.]

*To the Trustees of the Dudley Observatory:*

Gentlemen—The Scientific Council of the Observatory has the honor to inform you that it is now in session, and will be happy to receive any further communication which you may have to make.

Very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

JOSEPH HENRY, *Chairman.*

DUDLEY OBSERVATORY, 1858, June 30.



[Reply of the Trustees to the Scientific Council.]

ALBANY, June 30, 1858.

*Prof. JOSEPH HENRY, Chairman:*

Dear Sir—I have received your communication of this day. Our Trustees have had no meeting since Saturday last, and I know of no further communication which they have to make. If the Scientific Council have any recommendations to make concerning a successor to Dr. Gould, they will be received by our Trustees with the most respectful consideration.

I have the honor to be,

Your obedient servant,

THOMAS W. OLCOTT,

*President Board Trustees, Dudley Observatory.*

[From the Scientific Council to the Trustees.]

DUDLEY OBSERVATORY, July 1.

*To the Trustees of the Dudley Observatory:*

Gentlemen—Waiving for the moment what we consider our rights as members of the Scientific Council, and the contract by which we deem the scientific concerns of the Observatory to have been placed in our charge, we make the following propositions of conciliation, viz:

1. To take, unconditionally, immediate charge and direction of the Dudley Observatory, subject only to the Board of Trustees, thus occupying, ourselves, the place of Director.

If this is not acceptable to the Trustees, then

2. To refer the difficulties between Dr. Gould and the Trustees, to five discreet and wise citizens of Albany, two to be named by the Trustees, two by the Scientific Council, and these four to choose a fifth. The award of the arbitrators to involve the complete decision as to the future arrangements of the Institution, and the Trustees and Scientific Council to pledge themselves to abide by this determination.

Should neither of the propositions be acceptable to the Trustees, the following:

3. To appoint a committee of three members representing both the majority and minority of the Board, to confer with the Scientific Council, in order to ascertain if any measures of reconciliation can be suggested.

Respectfully your obedient servants,

JOSEPH HENRY,

A. D. BACHE,

BENJAMIN PIERCE.

[Reply of the President of the Board of Trustees.]

ALBANY, July 1, 1858.

*Professors HENRY, BACHE and PIERCE:*

Gentlemen—I have just received your propositions of this date, and have consulted such of our Trustees as I have, in a short



time, been enabled to meet with, and am obliged to refer you to my note to Prof. Henry, of yesterday, as the *only* basis of an amicable adjustment of existing difficulties.

I have the honor to be,

Your obedient servant,

THOMAS W. OLCOTT,

*President Dudley Observatory.*

The Trustees do not feel called upon to enter into any argument to justify themselves in refusing to appear before this self-created tribunal, or in declining to accept either of the propositions contained in the communication of the first of July. The Trustees had determined, as they had done once before, to *get rid of Dr. Gould*. It was their deliberate judgment that the best interests, if not the salvation of the Institution, required that this should be done—upon this conviction they had acted. They believed, as every reader of this history will believe, that the gentlemen composing the Scientific Council, were brought to Albany, as they had been in January, to overrule the action and thwart the purposes of the Trustees. In all their proceedings, from first to last, they exhibit themselves as they had done before, not as the disinterested advisers of the Trustees, but as the partizans and champions of Dr. Gould. Under these circumstances, what public good could result from a compliance with the summons of these gentlemen, or an acceptance of either of their propositions. What ought the Trustees to have done, more than they did do? The Scientific Council had been distinctly informed that it was the determination of the Board, that Dr. Gould should no longer continue to be con-

nected with the Observatory. They had also been informed that any recommendations they might see fit to make, concerning a successor to Dr. Gould, would receive the most respectful consideration. This was all, in their judgment, that courtesy demanded, or the interests of the Observatory, would allow.

It has been said, and so far as the Trustees have learned, this is the chief point upon which the propriety of the action of the Trustees has been questioned, that they ought to have allowed Dr. Gould to be heard. But let it be remembered that the only hearing which had been demanded, or was desired, was to be had before the self-constituted tribunal which had been convened at his instance; and which, as they believed, and that too, not without sufficient reason, as they think they have already shown, had no other purpose in view but the protection of Dr. Gould and the defeat of the Trustees. Had Dr. Gould desired to meet the Trustees for the purpose of explaining or disproving any of the statements or charges by which he felt himself injured or aggrieved, such a hearing would have been promptly and cheerfully conceded to him. He had been allowed such a hearing in January, of which he, and his associates, who had now been transformed into a tribunal of last appeal, had, to the fullest extent, availed themselves. They had, for the time, been successful. Now, they had no relish for a second experiment of the same kind. With these facts before any enlightened and unprejudiced mind, the Trustees are ready to meet

its judgment. They felt then, and subsequent events have fully justified their belief, that, to have submitted themselves and the vital interests of the Observatory to such an adjudication as was then proposed, would have been an inexcusable surrender of their own official responsibility.

At the close of their judicial labors, these men were able to present, as the result of their "rigorous examination," no less than THIRTY-TWO points, methodically and numerically arranged, in all of which the Trustees are condemned, and Dr. Gould acquitted—in which the Trustees are adjudged to be wrong in everything, and Dr. Gould in *nothing*. The entire vocabulary of compliment and eulogium, in which these Scientific gentlemen are said to be unrivalled proficient, has been exhausted in extolling the merits of their colleague. This single fact is quite sufficient to show what the Trustees had to expect at the hands of such a tribunal. All that Dr. Gould had done, and more that he had not done, was deemed worthy of the most emphatic commendation, and the conduct of the Trustees throughout was denounced with equal emphasis.

The Trustees having thus declined to submit themselves to the "tender mercies" of the Scientific Council, these gentlemen, finding themselves baffled in the execution of their first plan for saving their favorite, resorted to a still more desperate expedient. They

commenced with fulminations. Falling back upon their character of *advisers*, and under the pretence of giving the Trustees scientific counsel, they issued and sent forth, to enlighten the world, a series of *advisory* resolutions, each preceded by a preamble, abounding with the most terrific condemnation of the Trustees; and finally, having exhausted both their denunciations and advice, they proceed to exercise *squatter sovereignty* by taking the Observatory and its affairs into their own hands—and to employ such physical force as they deemed sufficient to keep out the Trustees and defend themselves in their unlawful possession. The late Chief of Police, with an adequate number of assistants, have found steady and appropriate employment, probably at the expense of the Coast Survey, in standing sentinel and guarding the premises against any possible attack from the rebellious and refractory Trustees. The Trustees themselves can scarcely help admiring the cool hardihood with which all this has been done. They find themselves most surprised by the fact, that there are found those among their own fellow-citizens who, in their blind obsequiousness to these distinguished sons of science, are ready to encourage and commend this unmitigated outrage. The resolutions and their preambles should not be omitted in this history. They were as follows :



DUDLEY OBSERVATORY, }  
 July 2d, 1858. }

*To the Trustees of the Dudley Observatory:*

GENTLEMEN—We have the honor to present to you our counsel in the following preambles and resolutions, adopted at our meeting this day.

Very respectfully yours,

JOSEPH HENRY,  
 A. D. BACHE,  
 BENJAMIN PIERCE.

*Whereas*, The Scientific Council have received the resolution of the Trustees, demanding the removal of the Director ; *whereas*, they find that Dr. Gould has been condemned without being heard in his own defence ; *whereas*, the Trustees have resisted all the attempts of the Scientific Council to obtain for Dr. Gould the opportunity of meeting the charges which have been made against him ; *whereas*, these charges appear to be mostly frivolous, with the exception of the two charges of incompetence and peculation ; therefore,

*Resolved*, That the Scientific Council must advise the Trustees that their persistence in their present course of removing the Director is opposed to all the recognized principles of justice ; and is so utterly at variance with the system of guardianship, by which the laws of our country protect the rights of our citizens against every form of despotism, that it will be regarded as a bitter and burning disgrace by the whole community, and will not fail to obstruct all further contributions for the support of the Observatory.

*Whereas*, The Scientific Council have carefully examined the statement which has been transmitted to them by the Secretary of the Board of Trustees, accompanying the resolution upon which such removal is required ; *whereas*, they do not find in this statement any reasonable foundation for the serious charges which have been made against the Director, and, *whereas*, they have examined the voluminous documentary evidence which Dr. Gould has transmitted to them in his defence, and, *whereas*, they find in the evidence the triumphant refutation of all the charges which are made against him ; therefore,

*Resolved*, That they must advise the Trustees that the removal of Dr. Gould would be a gross violation of their obligations to him.

*Whereas*, This Council have carefully examined the scientific progress of the Observatory, and find it in all respect to be ably and judiciously conducted ; *whereas*, they find that the labors of the Director and his assistants have been characterized by the utmost zeal and energy ; *whereas*, they find that no opportunity for astronomical observation has been permitted to pass unimproved ; *whereas*, they find in the character of the work which



has been already done, and in the unrivalled Meridian Circle which has been constructed under his direction, the most indubitable proofs of the greatness of his capacity for astronomical observation, therefore,

*Resolved*, That they must advise the Trustees, that the removal of Dr. Gould will be an irreparable injury to the scientific operations of the Observatory.

*Whereas*, The Council are persuaded that under the circumstances of Dr. Gould's removal, no honorable and trustworthy astronomer would be willing to occupy his place, and take unrighteous possession of the splendid instrument into which the suggestions of his genius have been incorporated by its celebrated makers; therefore,

*Resolved*, That they cannot, by advice, or any other way, acquiesce in his removal.

*Whereas*, The Scientific Council are informed that the Trustees decline all further personal intercourse with Dr. Gould; therefore,

*Resolved*, That an Executive Committee of their body be appointed, whose duty it shall be to conduct the scientific administration in all its relations to the Trustees and the general visitors of the Observatory.

*Resolved*, That for the month of July, Prof. Bache shall constitute the Executive Committee; that for the month of August, Prof. Pierce shall constitute it; and for the month of September, Prof. Henry.

It may be as well here, as elsewhere, to notice one or two points which are brought to view in these resolutions. In the preamble to the first resolution, it is said that the charges made against Dr. Gould, "appear to be mostly frivolous, with the exception of the charge of *incompetence* and *peculation*." And in their "Defence" of Dr. Gould the Scientific Council say, "The *ostensible* reasons assigned by Mr. Olcott and those voting with him for their late astonishing course, are, the alleged *incompetency*, *dishonesty*, peculiarity of temper &c., of Dr. Gould." Much ado has been made by the Scientific Council and their sympathizers, about these charges of incompetency and peculation. Under the head of "Incompetency," in the "Defence," the Scien-

tific Council say, "We cannot refrain from expressing our astonishment that Mr. Olcott should presume to pronounce a judgment in this case." The sympathizers, too, affect to be greatly shocked at the temerity of Mr. Olcott in thus daring to decide upon the scientific qualifications of Dr. Gould. The prominence which these gentlemen have given to this point and their loud expressions of indignation have not been without their effect. They have led some honest men to believe that there was something in it; and that, really, Mr. Olcott had done some great injustice to the scientific reputation of Dr. Gould.

That there may be no misapprehension about it, and that equal justice may be done, it will be worth while to go back and see what charge had been made against Dr. Gould in this respect. It has already been seen, that for nearly three years, Dr. Gould had been promising great things for the Observatory, but accomplishing nothing. Mr. Olcott, in his address to the Board on the subject, after noticing this feature in the administration of Dr. Gould, proceeds, very naturally, to inquire, "why this continued delay and studied attempt to amuse with trifles? Why do these noble-instruments remain so long in their boxes, when every astronomer, conscious of his own ability, would pant for the unfolding glories which they are expected to reveal?" These, certainly, were very pertinent questions, and very naturally suggested by the circumstances of the case. It would have been more satisfactory

if the Scientific Council, after having sufficiently chastised Mr. Olcott for having ventured to hint at a solution of these questions, had seen fit to assign a better reason for the extraordinary inactivity which had characterized the whole course of Dr. Gould, in respect to the affairs of the Observatory.

Mr. Olcott, after having propounded these questions, proceeded to answer them as well as he could. He gave the same solution which, doubtless, had occurred to others, who had observed the course of Dr. Gould, and knew what he had promised and what he had not done. Others may not have had the courage to express it, but Mr. Olcott was not alone in the opinion he entertained. This is what he said, and all that he has said, in respect to the *incompetency* of Dr. Gould. "The truth," he says, "*in my judgment*, lies in a nutshell. It is a discreet unwillingness to test his skill as a practical astronomer." This was Mr. Olcott's opinion. It may be the opinion of others. The Scientific Council entertain a different opinion. Professor Bache, if his indignation speech at the late meeting of the Albany sympathizers, has been correctly reported, looks upon Dr. Gould as the great astronomical light of the western hemisphere—"the *American Bessel!!*" The world may place a higher value upon the opinion of Professor Bache and Professor Henry and Professor Pierce, than upon the opinion of Mr. Olcott. Dr. Gould has this advantage. Yet after all, it is *opinion* against *opinion*; for it is certain that "the skill" of Dr. Gould,

"as a practical astronomer," remains to be tested. Even according to the history of his astronomical career given by the Scientific Council, in his "Defence," it has not yet been tested. It is certainly true, that it has not been tested at the Dudley Observatory. That the professional reputation of Dr. Gould may suffer serious damage, as the result of this controversy, is very likely; but it will not be, because, in looking around for a cause to which to ascribe the unaccountable procrastination which has characterized his whole career in the Dudley Observatory, Mr. Olcott came to the conclusion that such cause was to be found in his distrust of his own ability, as a practical astronomer.

The only other charge which the Scientific Council regard as serious, is that which they choose to designate as "*peculation*," and in another place they speak of it under the name of *dishonesty*. That any such charge has been made, or even intimated against Dr. Gould, is the merest pretence. In nothing does the disingenuousness of these Defenders of Dr. Gould, and their twelve endorsers, more conspicuously appear, than in their strenuous endeavor to have it believed that "*peculation*" and "*dishonesty*" had been imputed to Dr. Gould. These defenders, in their anxiety to find, in the address of Mr. Olcott to the Board, some unjust accusation against Dr. Gould, have seized upon what he had said in relation to the Altona letter, and ingeniously contrived to *spell out*, from these remarks, the word "*peculation*." Having conceived the idea, they at once work



themselves up into a perfect paroxysm of indignation at the image of their own creation. In their "Defence," they have one "head" devoted to "Peculation," and another to the "Letter to the German Journal," thus adroitly seeking to have the unsuspecting reader infer that, besides what he had said about the letter, Mr. Olcott had elsewhere made this groundless attack upon the reputation of Dr. Gould. There are many, doubtless, who have been led to believe that this unjust accusation has really been made. See how fervid these men grow the instant they come to their "head" of "Peculation." "It is difficult," they say, "to convey our idea in regard to this charge, without using such strong language as we prefer not to employ. To say that it is untrue—that it has not a particle of foundation—that it is baseless—has not the shadow of reality, or an excuse for it, would be feeble, compared with the convictions that we have of the character of the imputation." It would be very natural to suppose that these gentlemen could not thus excite themselves without some foundation.

Let us see, therefore, what has been done to bring on this unhappy mental condition. Immediately after Dr. Gould had been re-instated in January, he made a communication to the Board of Trustees, in which he stated that "the Superintendent of the Coast Survey had offered to undertake and complete, as early in the season as possible, a measurement of the longitude-difference of the Dudley Observatory, from one of the fixed



points of his telegraphic survey, furnishing salaried assistants from his corps, gratuitously, provided the Observatory would defray the actual outlay, which he estimated at \$600," and recommending the acceptance of this liberal proposition. The Trustees adopted the recommendation and accepted the proposition. The requisite amount was appropriated, and has been received by Dr. Gould. The Trustees suppose the work has been done, though upon this point they have very little information.

On the 5th of April, Dr. Gould wrote a letter—for he is fond of writing, and it may be no more than justice to say that he writes well. This letter was not intended for the meridian of Albany. It made its appearance in a German Astronomical Journal. In this letter, after stating that the Coast Survey had no official connection with the Observatory, he proceeds to say, that "by permission of the Superintendent, it had been allowed to him and some of his assistants, to devote their leisure time to the arrangement of the Observatory, at the same time continuing, as before, their longitude determinations *for gaining a livelihood.*" In the same letter he states what, if true, it did not much become him to proclaim, that "the Observatory had no means on hand for salaries or for the most necessary expenditures."

Mr. Olcott, in his address, after speaking of the impropriety of sending such a letter abroad to be published and circulated there, proceeds as follows: "This

disclosed the fact, which now, for the first time, comes to our knowledge; that, not the Coast Survey, but Dr. Gould, individually, pockets, in addition to his salary, the very considerable income from longitude determinations. This truly solves a problem and explains his past anxiety to grasp the legislative appropriation."

Now, it is submitted to the candid reader to say, whether in all this—and this is every word that was said on the subject—there is any thing that, by any possible implication, involves a charge of *peculation* or *dishonesty*. The Superintendent of the Coast Survey had offered to determine the longitude of the Observatory. For that service, the Trustees had agreed to pay \$600. This sum has been paid. The Scientific Council, in their "Defence," state that the actual disbursements by Dr. Gould, in the prosecution of the work, had amounted to \$928.94.

To satisfy themselves as to the real expense of such a work, the Trustees, since the publication of the "Defence," have, through the kindness of a friend, procured some information, which they deem important. It is contained in a letter from Professor Bond of the Cambridge Observatory, which is as follows:

HARVARD COLLEGE OBSERVATORY, }  
CAMBRIDGE, July 20, 1858. }

Dear Sir: \* \* \* \* In regard to your enquiries respecting the probable expense which would be incurred in a telegraphic determination of the difference of longitude between the Dudley and Harvard Observatories, I can see no reason for estimating the cost *beyond two hundred dollars*; and if, as I understand is the case, at the Dudley Observatory, the Transit instrument is in position, and the Clock properly

arranged, and the electric connection made with the main lines, *I think it should not cost so much.* At Cambridge we have daily communication with Boston, and can join issue with the offices there at any hour.

It is very convenient to have a reading operator at the Observatory, for conversation. We have usually paid him five dollars a night when successful, and three dollars a night when he comes to the Observatory, and clouds or other hindrances intervene.

In determining the difference of longitude between Quebec and Cambridge last year, the charges at this end of the line *were fifty-one dollars*; and I do not know any circumstance that should have occasioned the expense to have been greater at Quebec, as our amount included the amount paid to operators at Cambridge, Boston and Portland.

In connecting Cambridge with Fredericton, New Brunswick, *the charges at this end of the line were, I think, something less than fifty dollars*; what the expenditures were at Fredericton I have not learned. The proprietors have never yet, in any instance, I believe, charged for the use of the lines and batteries. \* \* \* \*

Yours, faithfully,

W. C. BOND.

The Legislature had appropriated \$2,000 for the purpose of ascertaining the true meridian of such locality or localities, as the Regents of the University should prescribe. In March the four gentlemen comprising the Scientific Council, addressed a letter to J. V. L. Pruyn, Esq., one of the Regents, asking that the appropriation might be assigned to the Dudley Observatory, "in order to establish the precise meridian of that Institution." In this letter these gentlemen say: "To complete more than one telegraphic longitude determination properly, by means of the appropriation made to the Regents for the purpose, ought not, in our judgment, to be expected." And again, in the same letter, they say: "But a small proportion of longitude measurements of the Coast Survey have been found practicable, for the

sum now appropriated by the Legislature for the purpose."

It may be proper also here to state, that since the proposition to undertake this work was made in January, Dr. Gould has stated to several members of the Board of Trustees, that it would occupy TWENTY-FIVE months, and that the work would be of such a character as to render it impossible to do any other Observatory work during that period.

There is obviously some mystery overhanging this subject, which the Trustees, professing their ignorance, leave to others to solve. Whether in fact the actual cost of determining the longitude of the Observatory is \$2,000, as the Scientific Council, in their communication to the Regents, would have it understood; or whether it is \$600, according to the estimate of the Superintendent of the Coast Survey, in the proposition submitted to the Trustees of the Observatory, by Dr. Gould, in January; or whether, as would really seem to be the fact, from the very explicit letter of Prof. Bond, the cost would be less than \$200, must be left to others to determine. Nor are the Trustees yet able to determine how the matter stands between Prof. Bache and Dr. Gould in relation to the work at the Dudley Observatory; whether the \$600, received by Dr. Gould, belongs to him, or to Prof. Bache, or to the Coast Survey, or by whom the loss of \$328.94, according to the statement contained in the "Defence," is to be borne. The whole subject, as it now appears, is eminently suggestive. It



might be useful for those, who, in the discharge of official duty, may be called upon to vote for appropriations to the Coast Survey, to satisfy themselves whether it costs \$2,000 or \$200 to determine the longitude of any particular locality.

There is one other subject connected with this matter of longitude determination, which, in the judgment of the Trustees, is not without its bearing upon this controversy. It is indicative of the true character of the gentlemen who composed the Scientific Council. In their letter to Mr. Pruyn, already noticed, they say, "It is doubtless known to the Regents of the University, as of course to yourself, that the method of telegraphic longitude measurement—a method so far surpassing all others in delicacy and precision, that no thought of any other can be entertained between places connected with a telegraphic wire, is pre-eminently a national one, known in Europe as the American method. *It was devised, developed and perfected solely by officers of the Coast Survey of the United States, and even the subsidiary apparatus is the invention of this National Institution.*"

In contrast with this claim, let the language of these same gentlemen, on the same subject, upon another occasion be read. At the Albany meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, held in the year 1851, Prof. Bache, the President of the Association, bore the following testimony on this very



point, and to the extraordinary scientific merits of Professor Mitchell generally :

“What triumph greater than that of our Cincinnati Brother, (Prof. O. M. Mitchell,) when the Committee of the Association reported so strongly in favor of his admirable method of recording right ascensions and declinations? Truth triumphed, through his love of it! What a triumph for American Science, when the “American method” of observing is adopted at Greenwich. The contribution, by whomsoever made, by however many shared, is a contribution to the glory of the country. The generous award of credit to our country by this name, by the illustrious Astronomer of Greenwich, is not the less honorable to him than to us. Let us show ourselves worthy of the spirit, by sinking all personal views in a general contribution to the American method. If the Association is worth any thing, it should be adequate to this: let this be the test.”

Professor Pierce (another member of the late Scientific Council with Dr. Gould,) was appointed Chairman of a Select Committee, at the New-Haven meeting of the Association for the Advancement of Science, to report on Professor Mitchell's system of astronomical observations. Professor Pierce reported :

“The Committee are not aware that the history of Astronomical Science exhibits a more astonishing instance of great results produced, with what would seem to be wholly inadequate means. With the ordinary tools of a common mechanic, and an insignificant pecuniary outlay, an isolated individual has aspired to rival the highest efforts of the most richly endowed Institutions, upon which sovereigns and governments have showered their inexhaustible patronage, and his aspirations have been crowned with success. The Committee are persuaded that Prof. Mitchell's plan will lead to still more admirable results, and contribute yet farther to the advancement of Astronomical Science.”

Professor Bache, at the same meeting, made the following additional remarks, in compliment to Professor Mitchell:

“The value of this decided and perspicuous report was en-

hanced by the cool investigating character of the members of the Committee. The circumstances attending the reception of the description of Prof. Mitchell's invention at the New Haven meeting, further increased its value. It is not surprising that those versed in methods of Astronomical observations, in established use, should be skeptical in regard of the performance of an apparatus avowedly constructed with imperfect means, and startled when its results were stated as vieing with those of perfect instruments, imported or made at large cost. These opinions were freely expressed, and no considerations of private friendship were allowed to interfere with the protest, which seemed to many members of the Association to be necessary against the pretensions thus set up."

Prof. Bache continues :

"Prof. Mitchell did not doubt; but with a manly love of truth courted examination, and invited those who objected, to make the closest scrutiny of his results. This has been done at the present meeting. It goes out then with the stamp of this Association; it has passed a critical ordeal and stands by its merits as one of the most remarkable steps ever made in our country, in the progress of Astronomical observation."

Having come to the conclusion that every thing that had been said against Dr. Gould, except the two charges which have first been noticed, are "mostly frivolous," the Scientific Council, elected and qualified to give scientific advice, proceeded, by solemn resolution, to declare their opinions. As *scientific men*, they gravely resolve that what the Trustees have been doing is opposed to all the recognised principles of justice. They "*must so advise*" the Trustees. That it is utterly at variance with the system of guardianship by which the laws of our country protect the rights of our citizens against every form of despotism. This is their *scientific advice*. And then, as scientific men, of course, they proceed to *predict* what the whole community will do about it. It will regard it "as a bitter and burning disgrace." And not content to stop here, they "pro-

ceed to make " another scientific *prediction*,—fatal, if verified, to the future prospects of the Observatory. All further contributions for its support are to be obstructed.

The Trustees have no inclination to hold up to ridicule any thing which men who have inscribed their names so high on the roll of fame, have seen fit, *as scientific men*, to do. They simply suggest the inquiry for others to answer, whether, in giving *such advice*, they have not done this for themselves?

These wise men next proceed to state, in their preamble to the *second* resolution of advice, that they have carefully examined Mr. Olcott's statement, and the result is, there is nothing in it. "They do not find in this statement any reasonable foundation for the serious charges" which had been made against Dr. Gould. Not only so, but they had also examined a large amount of documentary evidence on the other side, and the result was a triumphant refutation of all the charges which had been made against Dr. Gould. They, therefore, proceeded again to *advise*. The Trustees were accordingly made to know—scientifically of course—that if they dared to remove Dr. Gould, they would do *very wrong*. Such an act would be "a gross violation of their obligations to him." These gentlemen, it may be presumed, felt all that they said. But the Trustees, in their "ignorance," of which so much has been said in the "Defence," really thought the *advice* was not within the scope of their commission.

Again the oracle speaks. The affairs of the Observatory had been "carefully examined," and it was found, of course, that everything had been "ably and judiciously conducted." "Zeal and energy" were written on every thing they saw, and on every side, they discovered "*the most indubitable proofs of the greatness of Dr. Gould's capacity for astronomical investigation.*" It is true, they could not say much about "astronomical observation," but this they could say; that "no opportunity for such observation had been permitted to pass unimproved." They are now prepared again to *advise*, and they accordingly admonish the Trustees that, if they do remove Dr. Gould, the Observatory *will never get over it!*

Had the Scientific Council contented themselves with this "*parting counsel*," the Trustees, whatever they might have thought of its propriety, would probably have kept their thoughts to themselves. But, as "false prophets" sometimes do, not content with predicting the utter failure of the Observatory, if they and their associates should turn their backs upon it, they proceed to do what they can to fulfil their predictions. Of course, no astronomer could expect to survive their disapprobation. Certainly, no one would voluntarily incur their frown. They, therefore, proceed, with due solemnity, to denounce as neither honorable nor trust, worthy any man who shall dare to occupy the place from which Dr. Gould has been so unjustly ejected



Whoever shall lay his unrighteous hands upon "the splendid instrument into which the suggestions of Dr. Gould's genius have been incorporated," must be prepared to meet the frowns of this angry council. Thus, these gentlemen seem to suppose that the fate of the Observatory, for all future time, is in their hands; that it can only be saved from hopeless ruin by appeasing their wrath. That cannot be done, if Dr. Gould is removed. They therefore *advise*, lastly, that they cannot, by advice or in any other way, acquiesce in the removal of Dr. Gould.

But, as in January, when so dark a cloud hung over it, "they did not desert it," so now, such is their love for the Observatory, that they cannot give it up without one more effort to save it. They have *advised* and *prophesied* ruin, and fulminated against the Trustees and every unlucky astronomer who should be tempted to take unrighteous possession of what Dr. Gould had been compelled to leave. But all this is not enough for them to do for the Observatory. One struggle more must be made. They *resolve* again, and they are again *transformed*. With men of such scientific attainments transformation is an easy process. They are no longer a Scientific Council, nor yet an appellate tribunal, clothed with authority to review and reverse, at pleasure, anything that may have been done by the Trustees. They are now an Executive Committee, endowed with power to displace the Trustees—to take posses-



sion of the Observatory, and conduct its affairs according to their sovereign pleasure.

The Trustees had now no alternative but to yield to necessity, and declare themselves absolved from all further connection with the Scientific Council; holding them, as they do the rest of the scientific world, "enemies in war, in peace friends." Accordingly, on the 3d of July they adopted the following resolutions:

*Whereas*, At a meeting of the Trustees of the Dudley Observatory, held on the 19th of January, 1858, after reciting that Professors Henry, Bache, Pierce and Gould had been, on the 3d day of September, 1855, informally elected as the Scientific Council of the Board, and had acted as such, rendering valuable services, and that in order to give to their appointment the formal sanction of the Board at a regular meeting thereof, it was

*Resolved*, That the Board ratify and confirm the election of said persons as a Scientific Council, and will at all times be happy to receive from them any *suggestions* which they may deem calculated to advance the object and aims of the Institution;

*Whereas*, by the charter of the Dudley Observatory, the Trustees alone are invested with power to manage the estate and concerns of the corporation, and to appoint such officers and servants as they may deem necessary;

*And whereas*, Dr. B. A. Gould has heretofore been appointed the Director of this Observatory, and since such appointment, for reasons which this Board deemed not only sufficient to justify, but imperatively to demand such action, this Board has felt constrained to terminate its relations with Dr. Gould;

*And whereas*, denying the authority of this Board to control the affairs of the Institution, Dr. Gould has refused to submit to its action and appealed from its decision to the Scientific Council, and that body, assuming powers with which they were never clothed, and exercising authority which, as they can but know, it was never intended they should exercise, have constituted themselves a tribunal to sit in judgment upon the legitimate action of the Board, and have, with surprising assurance, assumed to condemn and reverse such action; and having done this, have without authority or color of right, and in defiance of this Board, constituted themselves an Executive Committee to manage the affairs of the Observatory; now therefore,

*Resolved*, That this Board, impelled by the exigency of the circumstances, regard it as their imperative duty to declare, and they do hereby declare, the relations which have heretofore

existed between the Trustees and the Scientific Council, to be dissolved and terminated.

*Resolved, further,* That this Board will feel constrained to regard the further occupation of the Observatory premises by the gentlemen composing the Scientific Council, or any other person by their authority, as a violation of the legal rights of this Board, so clear and manifest, that it cannot pass unnoticed; and that the President of the Board be authorised, in his discretion, to take all necessary measures to secure the possession and control of the property of the Institution.

*Resolved,* That Prof. O. M. Mitchell be appointed Director of the Observatory, and that Gen. Pruyn, Mr. Wilder and Dr. Armsby, be a committee to announce this appointment and invite Prof. Mitchell to visit this city, to consummate the necessary arrangements.

Thus terminated the official connection between the Scientific Council and the Observatory. On the 10th of July following, Professors Bache, Henry, and Pierce, placed before the public an address which they denominate a "Defence of Dr. Gould." This document has been widely circulated throughout the country under the official frank of the Coast Survey. One principal object of this publication seems to have been to divert the public attention from their acts of lawless usurpation. Hence, in the conclusion of their "Defence," these gentlemen publish their *advisory* resolutions, and *omit* the last, in which they resolve to take violent possession of the Observatory. It is evident from the fact that this resolution was suppressed, that they were not ambitious to take the public judgment upon the propriety of their conduct.

The style of this document is a little peculiar. It is scarcely what might have been expected from men whose whole life had been spent in the schools of science. The most cursory reader will not fail to observe on

every page some evidence of the satisfactory opinion the authors have of themselves, and their contempt for the "ignorance" of those who obstinately and unreasonably persist in refusing to surrender the Observatory to them.

Many of the mis-statements and mis-representations with which the "Defence" abounds have already been noticed. Some must yet be exposed. But to go through the entire pamphlet and correct all that is erroneous, would swell this statement beyond the limits which the Trustees feel constrained to assign to it.

In their "Defence" these gentlemen set out by stating, that *by the use of their name, and under the pledge of their management*, the large donation of Mrs. Dudley and many other smaller donations had been procured. This point has already been alluded to. These gentlemen, in their high appreciation of their own well-earned fame, have been known, sometimes, to assume, as their own, the credit which is due to others of less bold pretensions. They believe, undoubtedly, that it was upon their "faith and credit" that all the donations to the Observatory were made. For, what can science do without them? Or who would do anything for science, without the sanction of their names? The argument, to their minds, is conclusive. Mrs. Dudley must have given her great donation upon the faith of the arrangement by which, upon their own nomination, they were to become the Scientific Counsel of the Observatory. True, they had probably never

seen Mrs. Dudley—the application for the donation was made by Mr. Olcott alone—the fact of her intention to make it was communicated to him alone—these gentlemen were just as ignorant of the fact as any body else, until a few hours before the inauguration, when it was to be announced; and yet they assert, again and again, not doubting the truth of the assertion, that, but for the all-important fact that their names had been associated with the Observatory, such donations could never have been made. Nothing is more natural than that such men should so think. The deferential homage which they exact from all the devotees and friends of science, encourages the belief that their countenance is indispensable to the success of every scientific enterprise. And yet, rash and obdurate as they may seem, the Trustees cannot persuade themselves that a single dollar has been obtained for the Observatory, “by the use of the name” or “the pledge of the management” of the Scientific Council. Such is not the fact.

It is true—and the Trustees take pleasure in doing this justice to the gentlemen composing the Scientific Council—that, when in New-York, at the request of the Trustees, they eloquently and effectively addressed the Board of Underwriters on the subject of the advantages promised to that city from the success of the Observatory—advantages which have never been realized; but to the efforts of some of the Trustees alone is attributable the success of the application for aid from abroad.



The second head of the "Defence" is entitled "Loose Statements." "It seems hardly worth while," say the Defenders, "to notice the numerous small inaccuracies of Mr. Olcott's statements, except as tending to show the looseness and disregard of precision with which it has been made up—FOR EXAMPLE, *the liberal guaranty of the Hon. J. V. L. Pruyn, which induced the Superintendent to make his offer in 1855, is omitted.*" A brief reference to indisputable facts will show who makes "loose statements." Mr. Olcott made no statement on the subject at all. Of course he made no "loose statement." The Defenders *have* made a statement which is wholly unsupported by the truth of the case. The facts are as follows:—

Prof. Bache, in a letter to Dr. Gideon Hawley, a Regent of the University, written on the 29th of August, 1855, after speaking of the wants of the Coast Survey, says:

*"I have conferred with Dr. Armsby, who was present at the recent meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, at Providence, and who has given me expectation that an arrangement may be made mutually advantageous to the Coast Survey and to the Albany Observatory, and furnishing full means for the solution of the important problem proposed."*

Prof. Pierce, in giving an account of the same arrangement, before the meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Education, held immediately after the Providence meeting, described the conversation of Prof. Bache and himself with Dr. Armsby, and added:

Dr. Armsby wrote home to Mr. Thomas W. Olcott, a congenial spirit and liberal patron of science, and who, taking the sub-



ject in hand, found that many purses were eager to be opened in the spirit of munificence ; but feeling that one individual, a lady, had the first claims to his astronomical addresses, he proposed the subject to her. With that ready nobleness with which a great heart causes the hand to respond instantly to its high impulses, Mrs. Dudley drew a check for the whole amount, and at a single stroke of the pen the six thousand dollars was obtained for the purchase of the Heliometer.

Dr. Gould, speaking in the presence of Prof. Bache, at the Inauguration of the Dudley Observatory, and alluding to the first conversation between Prof. Bache and Dr. Armsby respecting the Heliometer, said :

He (Dr. Armsby) *guaranteed upon his own responsibility* that Albany would provide one, although none yet existed within the United States. He immediately hastened to Newport, to confer with that friend of all noble enterprizes, the Hon. John V. L. Pruyn. *On finding that Mr. Pruyn had left Newport,* he returned to Albany, and *after further conference with Mr. Olcott,* came back *with a confirmation of his guarantee,* provided that the Coast Survey would take for awhile the direction and control of the Observatory, for its observations.

The simple truth is, that Dr. Armsby, after his first guarantee to Prof. Bache at Providence, was naturally anxious to see and consult with an Albanian ; and remembering that Mr. John V. L. Pruyn was at Newport, made a visit to that place, but found that Mr. Pruyn had left. He then returned to Albany, having previously written to Mr. Olcott the particulars of the arrangement suggested by Prof. Bache. Mr. Olcott, immediately on the receipt of this letter, called on Mrs. Dudley, who cheerfully and at once contributed \$6,000 for the purchase of the Heliometer. Dr. Armsby also called on Gen. Robert H. Pruyn, who wrote a congratulatory letter to Prof. Bache. The Providence

meeting having, in the meantime, adjourned, Dr. Armsby went to New-York, where Prof. Bache then was, in attendance at the meeting of the Association for the Advancement of Education, and communicated to him the result of his efforts Prof. Bache immediately addressed the following letter to Gen. Robert H. Pruyn :

NEW-YORK, August 29, 1855.

DEAR SIR: Your kind and cheering letter of Aug. 28th has been handed to me by Dr. Armsby, and I have shown it to Prof. Pierce, who is here with me.

We will be stimulated by this liberality to make the Dudley Observatory famed for its good works. I shall at once take the steps to procure the necessary instruments and to set matters in motion, so as to be all ready for the *Pleiades* when they come along, that none be lost.

Yours truly,

R. H. Pruyn, Esq.

A. D. BACHE.

Mr. John V. L. Pruyn was never consulted, and never gave any "guarantee" at all. He first heard of the important and unconscious part he had played in this matter, from the published defence of Dr. Gould, and subsequently, with embellishments, from the lips of Prof. Bache, at a meeting in which both these gentlemen were prominent actors. At this meeting, whose chief object was to denounce the Trustees, and especially Mr. Olcott and Dr. Armsby, Professor Bache, willing to do what he could for the comfort of his Albany friends who yet stood "faithful among the faithless," turning with a graceful bow to Mr. Pruyn, who was present upon that occasion, acknowledged, with a liberal measure of well-put compliments, that it was his "*liberal guaranty*" that had first

induced him "to connect himself with the Observatory." "That friend of all noble enterprises" graciously reciprocated the bow, and silently appropriated to himself a very just tribute to the desert of another man. He must have thought, whatever may have been the views of Professor Bache, that however pleasant, these were rather "loose statements."

Take another of these "loose statements." These Defenders say:

"Dr. Gould not only purchased no Thermometers or Barometers abroad, *but he placed none in charge of Mr. Gavit.* \* \* \* We cannot hold Dr. Gould responsible for the non-recovery of the insurance, which business clearly belongs to the financial agent of the Trustees."

Again, the witness as to the "looseness" of these bold assertions shall be Dr. Gould himself. In a letter to Mr. Olcott, dated January 26, 1856, he writes: "*Gavit will take charge of the Barometers and Thermometers home from Paris. I have written to him about it.*" On the same day he wrote the same to Dr. Armsby. On the 14th of August, 1856, Dr. Gould writes to Mr. Olcott: "The invoice enclosed pertains to the Barometers and Thermometers *purchased by Gavit* in Paris." And nearly fourteen months later, on the 3d of October, 1857, Dr. Gould writes to Mr. Olcott respecting the insurance on the broken Barometer as follows: "*That Barometer matter, it belonged of course to me to see about. and it HAS NOT BEEN FORGOTTEN AT ANY TIME.*" Neither of the Trustees had any share whatever in ordering these Barometers and Thermometers.

Comment upon this very loose statement of the gentlemen of the Scientific Council, the enthusiastic, if not discreet "defenders" of Dr. Gould, is unnecessary.

Leaving the Barometers, the Council next enter upon the Dome. Mr. Olcott had stated that Dr. Gould had applied for the building of a new Dome. The Council boldly say: "The letters of Dr. Gould show that no such application was made." Let us see what that gentleman's letter really *did* say. He writes:

"It (the Dome) *ought to be rebuilt*. \* \* \* \* The bad construction of the base cannot be remedied by any reasonable expenditure. \* \* \* \* As I cannot *altogether* surrender the hope of *yet* seeing some equatorial instrument in the dome before long, it seems to me that \$1,800 could not be better employed at the Observatory. *May I beg for your DECISION as early as possible?*"

The Scientific Council might not regard this as an "application"—most men would. Who, then, makes the "loose statement?"

The next "loose statement" in Mr. Olcott's letter is exposed by the Council in the following language:

"Neither the estimates of Dr. Gould for mounting the instruments, nor his demands upon the Trustees, exceeded \$3,800, as alleged by Mr. Olcott. The estimates, subsequent to January 21, were requested by the Trustees, and, as will be subsequently shown, *did not reach an amount in any way comparable with this sum*. The details of them we give in the proper place."

Turning to these "details," which we are told are to show that Dr. Gould's demands upon the Trustees since January *did not reach an amount* IN ANY WAY COMPARABLE with the sum of \$3,000, we find them spread over several paragraphs. They are not given in a tabular form, as the Trustees, for the sake of convenience, will arrange them; but, as stated by the Council, they are as follows:



Balance of longitude appropriation,.....	\$1,500 00
For casing piers, .....	390 00
For digging well, &c.,.....	324 00
For Mr. Bygate's salary,.....	700 00
For Messrs. Farmer and Polsey,.....	258 98
For batteries,.....	110 00
For rare old astronomical books,.....	350 00
Total demands, by the Council's statement,...	<u>\$3,632 98</u>

In addition to these amounts thus stated by the Council, Dr. Gould had asked for \$300 for Pistor and Martins, and \$300 in addition to what is stated above, to Farmer and Polsey ; which would make the sum *greater* than that set down in round figures by Mr. Olcott.

The Trustees are willing to believe that the Council did not sum up the items set forth in their "Defence" of Dr. Gould, and were ignorant of their aggregate amount ; but even then, it was rather a "loose statement," and shows that neither the services of Prof. Pierce, nor the "Calculating Machine," could have been put in requisition.

There is another statement made by these Scientific gentlemen in this connection, which the Trustees find some difficulty in regarding as merely "loose." While still engaged upon this head, they say :

' There are other small matters which, in passing, it may be well to notice, such as these :

*That the pledge of Prof. Bache, to provide a transit for time, from the Coast Survey instruments, IS ONE WHICH HAS LONG BEEN REDEEMED: that the INSTRUMENT WAS MOUNTED*



IN APRIL, and has been in use on every clear night since that time."

The "pledge" of Prof. Bache was to supply a Transit instrument for time, at a cost of \$1,500, to be mounted and used in the Dudley Observatory. This instrument was purchased in Europe by Dr. Gould, in redemption of this "pledge." That it was *the* instrument agreed to be furnished by Prof. Bache is sufficiently evident from the fact that a room in the Observatory was prepared for it at a cost of several thousand dollars; that it is now, and has been, for a year and a half past, at the Observatory; and that the freight and charges upon it, amounting to about \$300, have been paid by the Trustees.

It still remains packed up in the boxes in which it arrived from Europe !!

In speaking of this instrument, Mr. Olcott had said :

"The splendid Transit instrument, the preparations for using which have cost the Trustees several thousand dollars, has been on hand twenty months, and the first step has not been taken towards mounting it, although the piers have been ready, the means provided, and Dr. Gould has been repeatedly requested to mount the instrument."

When they come to speak of this instrument in their "Defence," they say :

*The Transit Instrument.*—We agree with Dr. Gould, that under the present circumstances of the Observatory, *it was not desirable to mount the large Transit instrument.* The small one already mounted is adequate to give time for the regular operations of the Institution, and for the other purposes for which it is now employed. To expose the first-named costly instrument to injury, *by mounting it before it is to be used,* is not expedient.

And then in their summary, at the conclusion, they say: "*The falseness of the statements in regard to the large Transit instrument are shown.*"

To say that such a statement is very "loose," will hardly do. It is very *reckless*.

There are several other "statements" just as "loose" as those that have been exposed, but which the Trustees do not deem it worth while to notice.

In his statement presented to the Board of Trustees, Mr. Olcott had said that Dr. Gould's superlative precision and transcendental exactness in *ordinary matters*, had been but too lately discovered. He instanced the case of the piers. These, he said, must be built of stones so large and so free from the least imperfection, that the rich quarries of Lockport could not furnish a supply—that one of these stones, whose rejection had cost the Trustees about \$1000, now graced their grounds, a monument of their folly in yielding to excessive particularity.

To this subject, under the head of "Precision and Exactness," the Defenders of Dr. Gould have devoted several pages, much of which is occupied with an inflated notice of themselves. All they say of the rejected stone is, that they have verified its unfitness for its purpose "by a close inspection." Then, in their summary, they have the following:

The attack on Dr. Gould for his precision and exactness is next shown in its true light, as proving ignorance or something worse. The gravely made charge in regard to the Lockport stone, used to excite an unfounded prejudice against Dr. Gould, is disposed of by a summary statement of the facts.

The facts on this subject are briefly these: When Dr. Gould took charge of the Observatory, one of the first subjects of attention was the piers. These were to be

procured in season to mount the instruments before the inauguration. He desired to have the largest piers in the world. They must be compact, homogeneous limestone. At Cambridge, granite is used. At West Point, sand-stone. At Greenwich, the piers are in several pieces. At Oxford they are of brick or soft stone. At Bonne, of soft porous lime-stone. At Berlin and Paris of soft stone. At Pulkowa, of granite. Orders were given to have the stones cut from the Lockport quarries. Five different blocks were rejected. At length, two were obtained which were pronounced as good as the quarries would furnish. They were sent to Albany and drawn up the Observatory hill. Upon the arrival of Dr. Gould, he pronounced them unfit for use. The only defect was, that one stone had *a few pounds* broken off at one corner of the base—a base six feet by nearly three, and intended to rest on a foundation of common building stone. The stone, as it lies upon the Observatory grounds, has been noticed by other Astronomers, who have pronounced it the finest stone they ever saw. The piers, with the cap-stones, have cost over \$8,000—a sum exceeding, as the Trustees believe, the entire cost of all the piers, in all the other American Observatories.

The “Ingenious Crane” is a kindred instance of the same “excessive particularity.” All that Mr. Olcott said of this was that “an ingenious machine was invented by direction of Dr. Gould for placing the stones in position, which the masons would have done for one quarter the cost of the machine.”

The Trustees, ignorant as they are, are not so ignorant as not to know that great precision is necessary in placing such piers. But they also suppose that to move them to their place and elevate them, is a very simple and easy matter. A competent mechanic could do it all. But, to have a stone, which was to be devoted to such a purpose, moved and handled like common stones, would not suit the notions of Dr. Gould. He must have a crane contrived especially for this purpose. He accordingly directed an engineer to prepare plans. These were sent to Cambridge, and there examined. They were returned for alteration, and then sent to Cambridge again. Then they were sent to Washington, to be examined and approved by Professor Bache and Henry. The plan, being thus prepared, the machine must be built at a cost of \$500. The ropes, chains, pullies, &c., cost \$150 more, and another sum of \$150 was spent in raising it and placing it in position to be used. And then, to crown the whole, the entire front wall of both wings of the building had to be taken down to allow this machine to operate. Most men, the Trustees think, would regard this, as a degree of "particularity" amounting to great folly. These scientific gentlemen think otherwise. This is what they say :

The apparatus for placing the great piers by which the Meridian Circle is supported, we consider as being at once ingenious, economical and well contrived.

It may be that masons offered to place the stones in position for *one-quarter the cost of the machine*. In so doing, they showed an ignorance of the difficulty of the problem ; an ignorance perfectly excusable in them, although its adoption is not excusable in Mr. Olcott.

Nor are these isolated cases. The iron shutters for the dome and the wings present an instance of still more inexcusable extravagance. The dome had been built of wood, according to Professor Mitchell's plan, at a cost of about \$3000. It was intended that the shutters should be of wood also, and these would cost, perhaps, \$300. In 1857,—in the midst of the financial troubles of the country,—Dr. Gould directed the architect to prepare plans for flexible iron shutters—a thing, as the Trustees understand, unknown in any Observatory in the world. The plan has been executed. The shutters have been made, and now they are too heavy for the dome. A new dome must be built, at a cost of \$3000 or more, or else the shutters, which, with the machinery for opening and closing them, cost nearly \$2000, must be lost. Dr. Gould also caused expensive machinery to be constructed for opening the shutters of the wings. The practical loss to the Observatory, arising from these injudicious expenditures, is probably not less than \$5000. The attentive reader of the "Defence" will observe that, notwithstanding the rhetoric expended on this subject, these facts are uncontroverted.

Chronographs were deemed necessary for the Observatory. Such an instrument, the object of which is to record the exact time of making an observation, had been invented by the Messrs. Bond of Cambridge; but an instrument of their invention would not do for Dr.



Gould, although in use by the Coast Survey. He must have something new. He accordingly set an artist of Boston, at work to make a Chronograph, containing a new regulating principle. The experiment was a failure. It cost the Observatory \$750.

The "Defenders" of Dr. Gould, have a head devoted to Clocks and Chronographs. The reader, if he has the "Defence" before him, will doubtless find amusement, and perhaps instruction, in what is said under this head, but he will find nothing about this experimental Chronograph, although it was distinctly mentioned by Mr. Olcott in his statement of facts.

The "Defence" contains large extracts from what is called a report of Dr. Gould made to the Scientific Council on the 21st of December, 1857. The communication seems to have been made with a view to put the Council in possession of Dr. Gould's version of the origin of the difficulties which had led to his dismissal, and the appointment of Dr. Peters. It will be observed that the date of the "report" corresponds with the period of those difficulties. In the extract which it has been thought proper to give in the "Defence," we find Dr. Gould using the following language:

"In alluding to these difficulties, I desire only to cite them as illustrative of the state of affairs and *constant embarrassment since my first connection with the Observatory.* I have found it throughout *impossible to prevent continual interference,* leading alike to very large and entirely unnecessary outlay, and to results at variance with my taste and judgment. *From you and my most intimate friends I have not FOR THE PAST YEAR concealed this state of affairs.*

"Being not only influenced by considerations of taste and of economy, but impelled also by apprehensions as to points essential to the proper performance of the work going on, as regards its adaptation for astronomical use, I urged upon the Executive Committee the importance of permitting the work to be guided by one mind alone. They readily acceded to my views; and so strongly was I impressed with the importance of preventing the *recklessly lavish and injudicious expenditures of Dr. Armsby*, that, although oppressed, as you are aware, with overwhelming labors, I undertook the responsibility and care incident to the entire charge of the work, and was formally installed by the Executive Committee as Director, and clothed with full executive powers. I was assured that no outlay should be made or expense incurred without my approval.

"I visited Albany even more frequently than before, and gave attention to all matters of detail. *But to my pain and sorrow I found all in vain.* MY ORDERS WERE CONSTANTLY AND PERSISTENTLY DISREGARDED, and at each successive visit I found more numerous demonstrations that my Directorship was but nominal. *Written directions were set at naught*, and the same tendencies as before were manifested.

"Since this period, the expenditures *appear to have been going on as before, at a rate which may almost be characterized as inordinate, although the work appears to be performed, as a general thing, in a very inferior style.* With the circumstances attending the erection of the dwelling-house, gas-house, &c., you are already familiar, and I need not recapitulate them. They will serve as illustrations."

Now, in reference to the statements contained in these passages, which, let it be observed, were originally designed for the eye of the Scientific Council alone, it is worthy of remark, that not a single instance is specified, in which his "orders had been disregarded," or his "written directions set at naught." Dr. Armsby is specially selected as an object of his spleen, and the Scientific Council are informed that Dr. Gould had been very surprisingly exercised about the importance of preventing his "recklessly lavish and injudicious expenditures."

It is probable that the Scientific Council were made

to believe this. It is very likely, too, that some of their sympathizers in Albany have been brought to believe it. But the Trustees cannot imagine that such statements will find credence beyond the sphere of these influences. That the most extravagant and fruitless expenditures had been made, was a fact against which even Dr. Gould could not close his eyes; that the confidence of the Trustees in Dr. Gould had now become greatly impaired, was also a fact of which he was then not unaware; that the blame of these "recklessly lavish and injudicious expenditures" must fall somewhere, was obvious even to Dr. Gould himself. In view of these facts, he seeks to shield himself, by charging the Trustees, and particularly Dr. Armsby, with all this conceded extravagance.

The theory of his defence is adopted by his Defenders, and the charge of "wasteful expenditure" is boldly made against the Trustees, and Dr. Gould is acquitted of all blame!

It cannot have escaped the observation of the attentive and candid reader, that neither Dr. Gould, nor the gentlemen who defend him, have ventured to specify a single case in which Dr. Gould has been overruled by the Trustees, or any other person; or in which his "orders have been disregarded," or his "directions set at naught;" nor a single case in which Dr. Armsby or any other person has directed any expenditure to be made, contrary to his instructions, or against his wishes. These gentlemen must have been aware that, had they

undertaken to specify even a single instance in which this had been done, it would have been quite easy to disprove their allegations.

As the issue is left to stand upon general charges, without specification, the Trustees, averring that all the expenditures at the Observatory, from the time Dr. Gould became connected with it, were made under his immediate direction, or with his concurrence and approbation, proceed to give what they regard as the most satisfactory evidence to support their own statements, and disprove those of Dr. Gould. They present the testimony of the architects and mechanics, under whose immediate charge and supervision all the work at the Observatory was done. The intelligence and integrity of these men are beyond all impeachment. The following letters have been received from them. They will be found exceedingly pertinent upon the question of "wasteful expenditures:"

[From William Hodgins, Esq., Architect and Civil Engineer.]

ALBANY, January 18th, 1858.

*To Trustees of Dudley Observatory:*

GENTLEMEN—In reply to your enquiries, I beg to state, that the alterations and enlargements in the west wing of the Dudley Observatory, in front, were authorized and approved by Dr. Gould. The taking down of the front wall was absolutely necessary, for the purpose of receiving and setting the large capstone and piers, as well as for placing the Collimater pier, and the foundation. This was all authorised by Dr. Gould.

The taking down and enlargement of the rear of this room, (as I learnt at the time,) was a mere mistake of the contractor, and not known to you, Dr. Peters or me, until the opening had been made.

Dr. Peters and myself were very much displeased, and on mentioning the matter to you, I recollect that you immediately charged the contractor to do nothing again without my special order.



The Collimater pier of the rear enlargement was then ordered by Dr. Gould, who thought it would be needed for some purpose, which I do not now recollect, and the enlargement was ordered by him to correspond with that on the east wing, as the wall had already been taken down.

All this took place in the months of August, September and October, 1856, and the walls of this room, both in front and rear, were closed in during the latter part of November, of the same year.

The rear wall of the Circle room, was built up in October, I believe; the front wall was necessarily kept open during the whole winter, in consequence of Dr. Gould's objections to the piers from the Lockport quarries, and the time occupied in procuring others from Kingston.

All of the work above referred to was commenced in the summer of 1856, and was in progress at the Inauguration.

*I do not recollect, during the whole time I was Engineer at the Observatory, that any work has been performed under my supervision, not approved or authorized by Dr. Gould, and the plans, in all cases personally submitted to him.*

I have the honor to be

Respectfully your servant,

WILLIAM HODGINS,

*Architect and Civil Engineer, Exchange Building.*

[From W. W. Hague, Esq., Architect and Engineer.]

*To the Trustees of the Dudley Observatory:*

GENTLEMEN—I hereby certify that I was employed as Engineer on the Dudley Observatory building, from about the 1st of October, 1856, until the middle of February, 1857.

During the whole of that period, nothing was done by me, or by my orders, or under my supervision, without directions from Dr. Gould, nearly all of which were in writing, and copies of which are still in my possession, except in a single instance, when, varying from the general order of Dr. Gould to have all work done by the job, the work of raising and setting the Kingston stone, was done by the day, and at a much less cost. The plans for the dwelling-house, prepared under Dr. Gould's direction, in Boston, were found to be too costly. No delay was ever occasioned to the work, except by the detention arising from the transmission of plans to and from Cambridge, and the examination by Dr. Gould.

WM. W. HAGUE.

*Albany, July 29th, 1858.*

[From B. F. Smith, Esq., Architect and General Superintendent.]

*T. W. Olcott, Esq.:*

DEAR SIR—I have reviewed carefully the whole history of my connection with the Dudley Observatory, as Engineer and Architect, and can truly and confidently state, that nearly every



*expenditure incurred at the Observatory since my connection with it, has been authorized by Dr. Gould. I do not believe that one hundred dollars of expense has been incurred except under his direction, unless in connection with the Gas-house, and this I think was under the direction of Dr. Aubin.*

My connection with the Observatory commenced on the 28th of February, 1857. The west wing of the Observatory was at that time enclosed, and nearly finished. The east wing was still open in front, the large piers only having been placed in position; considerable delay having been occasioned by the failure of the large Lockport pier, and the necessity of going to Kingston for others. All of the work on the Observatory, from the time I entered upon my duties as Architect and Superintendent, until the present time, *has been done by the authority and under the direction of Dr. Gould. The plans have in all instances been submitted to him for approval.* Nothing has been commenced without his verbal or written directions. In regard to the house, the plans, which were made in Boston, for Dr. Gould, were sent to me to revise and make out working drawings and specifications. On examination of the plans and specifications, I found them so inaccurate, that they could not be used with any advantage. I gave them to several of our best builders, to make an estimate for the dwelling. After having looked them over, they were returned to me with a refusal to make an estimate, as they could not comprehend in a clear manner to warrant making a bill that would be satisfactory. On asking their opinion, what they thought would be the probable cost, they all concluded from eight to ten thousand dollars. *I could not find any one that would say he would build the house from that plan for nine thousand dollars.* It is my honest opinion, that the Boston plan *would have cost as much, if not more, than the present one.* I am not alone in that opinion. I stated the difficulties to Dr. Gould, and proposed to make new plans and specifications for him, to which he consented. I made new plans, *and sent them to Cambridge, for his inspection.* He returned them to me with his suggestions, to which I conformed as far as practicable. When he again returned to Albany, we spent considerable time *in reviewing the plans,* and comparing them with the plans from Boston, story with story, *and room for room.* After we had gone through with them, I understood him to give a *distinct approval,* and directions to go on at once. In a letter received soon after the Doctor left Albany, he says: "In regard to the two plans, I have no preference in the matter, other than to obtain the best accommodations." The present building is superior in every respect to what the other would have been, if built after the Boston plan. It is superior in solidity, in arrangement, in convenience, and in accommodations. The rooms are larger, better arranged, more convenient, and more of them. The insurance will not be more than half the amount it would be, if built of wood. And

the location is one hundred per cent. in its favor. I never before tried so hard to suit any man, as I have Dr. Gould, in everything I have done.

I am your most obedient

And very humble servant,

B. F. SMITH.

[From Messrs. Beardman and Waggoner, Carpenters.]

ALBANY, June 15, 1858.

*Messrs. Olcott, Vosburgh and Armsby:*

GENTLEMEN—In reply to your enquiries relative to the Observatory, we will state, that all of the carpenters' work done by us was done according to directions given by the architects, who received their instructions from Dr. Gould. We were told by you to do nothing until we had particular instructions from the architects, and to follow them strictly; that Dr. Gould was very particular, and you wished to do everything possible to please him. In every instance we did as we were directed.

Yours, respectfully,

BOARDMAN & WAGGONER.

[From Messrs. W. and D. Turner, Masons.]

*Messrs. Olcott, Vosburgh and Armsby:*

GENTLEMEN—You ask for information concerning the work done by us on the Observatory building. We endeavored to follow strictly the directions given us by the architects, who, we always understood, *were acting under special and written instructions from Dr. Gould.* We were satisfied that the cost of the work *was very great*, and often mentioned it to you; and you said Dr. Gould must have everything his own way, and you wished to do all to his satisfaction. We do not mean to blame any of the architects, who were acting under written orders from Dr. Gould, which we understood the committee had told them to follow. Very costly stones were rejected, and others procured, at very great expense, and of an inferior quality. *The same remarks would apply to much of the work done there in 1856 by us.* We are very respectfully yours,

Albany, June 23d, 1858.

W. & D. TURNER.

Mr. Olcott, in his remarks, took occasion to say that Dr. Gould had complained of the dwelling house, and then proceeded to add that Dr. Gould had procured specifications to be drawn in Boston, after his own plans, which were so badly contrived that they were abandoned, and a new plan was drawn here, changing the material from wood to brick, without increasing the

expense ; that this new plan was submitted to Dr. Gould by Mr. Smith, the architect, and *discussed room by room*, and approved by him before the house was built.

In respect to this subject, the following language is found in the "Defence:" "Dr. Gould informs us that the new plan was not 'submitted to him, and discussed room by room,' as Mr. Olcott asserts."

The matter itself would scarcely deserve a notice here, were it not for the question of veracity which it directly involves. It is an instance of what the Trustees have had occasion but too frequently to notice during the progress of this controversy, great carelessness on the part of Dr. Gould as to the truthfulness of his statements. Mr. Smith says, that upon the return of Dr. Gould to Albany, he spent considerable time with him "in reviewing the plans and comparing them with the plans from Boston, story with story, and room for room."

Before dismissing the "report of Dr. Gould" to his scientific brethren, the reader is invited, in contrast with the complaints which he says he had been making to them and "*his most intimate friends*," for the past year, to refer back to the letters written by him to Mr. Olcott and Dr. Armsby, during the same period. In his letter of the 20th of June, he says: "The work upon the hill is apparently going on well. I trust that your arrangements will be as fruitful and successful *as they are wisely and judiciously devised*." In another he is found acknowledging personal courtesies, and in another, the receipt

of a *gratuity* of \$300, as a contribution towards his pretended loss in the publication of the *Astronomical Journal*.

The defenders of Dr. Gould have seen fit to devote one head of their "Defence" to a vindication of Dr. Gould for his *delay* in coming to Albany. Upon this head the Trustees do not choose to expend many words. They are now convinced that it would have been better for the Observatory, and very likely it would have been better for Dr. Gould himself, if he had never come to Albany at all.

But there are one or two things which the Trustees deem worthy of notice in this connection. The one relates to the claim of Dr. Gould to occupy the Observatory. Upon this subject, his Defenders hold the following language :

"He (Dr. Gould) had given no pledge that he would permanently accept the office of Director previous to the completion of the endowment; *the only presumption* that he would accept it *after* that condition had been fulfilled, arose from the zeal he had manifested in the cause."

In this statement the Trustees concur. Dr. Gould had not accepted the office of Director. It had not been tendered to him. He was under no obligations to accept it, nor were the Trustees under any obligations to confer it upon him. Is there not then some affectation in the attempt of these gentlemen to excite sympathy on behalf of Dr. Gould, by referring to that "offering of his genius—the Meridian Circle?" How romantic and sentimental they grow all at once. "The



degree of personal feeling" they say, " must be *intense*, which would sever *the Director* from this instrument, without giving him the opportunity of establishing its reputation, and securing it from the obloquy behind which some unskillful observer might seek to hide his own incapacity." But suppose the application for a Professorship in Columbia College, with a salary of \$5,000 had been successful, what, then, would have become of all this romance and sentimentality?

Another remark made by the gentlemen who defend Dr. Gould, in this connection, is that " Dr. Gould is, after Mrs. Dudley, the *principal contributor* to the Observatory," by the devotion of his time, his talents, his thoughts and his labor.

Upon this point, the Trustees are not inclined to raise a question. They prefer to leave the reader to form his own judgment after he has seen what Dr. Gould has really done for the Observatory. They regard the statement, however, as having this importance. It shows, as the Trustees think, the exalted opinion which these gentlemen have of themselves, and of one another; and what any person who has the temerity to question any thing they may say or do, has to expect at their hands. The Trustees would not undervalue the opinion of such men, and yet they cannot place so high an estimate upon what Dr. Gould has done for the Observatory.

The " Defence " has another head devoted to " The sacrifice of Dr. Peters." Upon this subject the Trustees have already said all that they deem necessary.



But a word or two, in this connection, on the subject of the "Olcott Comet," may be allowed. "*Dr. Gould,*" his Defenders say, "*had directed Dr. Peters to institute a search for comets.*" His object in giving this direction, we are told, was, that by some discoveries of this kind, he might "obtain for the new Observatory a *certain popular favor.*" "Four comets," they say, "appeared and were detected elsewhere, before Dr. Peters' search proved successful." This fact, of course, is deemed worthy of mention. It detracts a little from the merit of Dr. Peters; and whatever will have that effect, should not be omitted. But at last Dr. Peters found a comet. It was a little thing—"a telescopic comet." He discovered it two days before anybody else. The discovery was no great affair, and yet Dr. Gould condescended—such was his disinterested magnanimity—to bestow upon it "*his generous commendation.*" He did this, his Defenders say, all the more, because he thought it would gratify Messrs. Armsby and Olcott. But Dr. Peters made a great mistake. It was unfortunate for him that he discovered it at all. Having done so, however, it was his business, according to the usage of those who have anything to do with comets, to give it a name. Most comets that have a known period as this has, bear the name of the discoverer, or of some friend or patron whom he desires to honor. Dr. Peters, had he been shrewd, would, at once, have decided that this "new comer" should have been called the "Gould Comet.", This would have been excellent. Or, he might well

have called it the "Bache Comet." No one would have doubted the fitness of such a name. Or, perhaps better still, it might have been called the "Coast Survey." But Dr. Peters, in his simplicity, forgot all these proprieties, and, as these Scientific gentlemen say, "pretended to confer upon the celestial visitant the name of the *Olcott Comet*." This they pronounce "*a ridiculous procedure*." They, of course, know—they are wise about such things. If they say it was ridiculous, so it must be. There is no appeal from their judgment on such a question. "The world," they say, "would hardly confer upon a telescopic comet the name of the *then* Vice President of the Trustees."

On the discovery of the Comet, Dr. Gould himself wrote that "it was a very pretty idea to give the Comet the esteemed name of the excellent Mr. Olcott," but on more reflection, and probably after conferring with his associates in the Scientific Council, it was found to be "entirely unwarranted by astronomical usage," and Dr. Gould, in his official capacity, as editor of the *Astronomical Journal*, although of course desirous of gratifying the feelings of Mr. Olcott, felt constrained to strike out the name of Olcott and call it the "*Fourth Comet of 1857*." To have had his name thus stricken from the celestial catalogue, these gentlemen really pretend to think, "must have grated on Mr. Olcott's feelings," and influenced his subsequent course in relation to Dr. Gould. The whole thing is contemptible and puerile. It has been alluded to, only for the purpose

of exhibiting the *spirit* with which the "Defence" has been conducted. None but men who were themselves affected by a morbid greediness for praise, could have conceived of such influences.

Kindred to the last, is an allusion to another member of the Board, who has in the discharge of his official duty felt constrained to oppose the continuance of Dr. Gould at the Observatory. It seems, that some *drills* were obtained at the Iron Works, of which this Trustee is one of the proprietors, by the mechanics employed by Dr. Gould to drill the piers. They were made of the form and material ordered, and were experimental. Two of the seven made, broke while in use. Dr. Gould, when settling for the work on the piers, refused to allow the charge for the tools. These honorable gentlemen gravely put forth this *little* circumstance, as evidence of moral courage—"indicating," they say, "a fearless determination to do right." It is significantly added, that this member of the Board "has since that time been among the most active in his opposition to Dr. Gould, and in the attempts to annoy and persecute him."

In referring to the arrangement that was made between the Trustees and the Scientific Council at their meeting in January, these gentlemen say, that "the first of Mr. Olcott's propositions was, to place the Observatory immediately and entirely in Dr. Gould's charge, *subject only to the Scientific Council in scientific matters*, provided he would bring two assistants with

him, and provided all would labor without expense to the Observatory, Mr. Olcott guaranteeing at the same time that the small amount necessary for mounting the instruments and the indispensable equipments, should be furnished." They also added that "the resolutions of the Board, at this time, confirmed their appointment as a Scientific Council, and ratified the proposition of Mr. Olcott."

The resolutions adopted by the Board at the time referred to are as follows:

*Whereas*, this Board did, on January 9, 1858, adopt the following:

*"Resolved*, That the Board of Trustees of the Dudley Observatory, as legal guardians of the Institution entrusted to their care, *must claim an undivided and entire control over its property, the appointment of its officers, and its general policy.* But while doing so, they most gratefully recognize the valuable co-operation and advice which they have received from the Scientific Council, and the distinguished Superintendent of the Coast Survey, and will ever receive with the greatest deference and respect the *suggestions* of gentlemen whose names are so illustrious in science, and who are so distinguished in their efforts for its advancement."

*And whereas*, Professors Bache, Henry, Pierce and Gould were, on the 3d of September, 1855, informally elected *as the Scientific Council* of THIS BOARD, and have acted as such, rendering valuable service, and in order to give their appointment the formal sanction of this Board at a regular meeting, therefore

*Resolved*, That we ratify and confirm the election of said persons *as SUCH Scientific Council*, and that we shall at all times be happy to receive from them any *suggestions* which they may deem calculated to advance the object and aims of the Institution.

*Resolved*, That the Board of Trustees ratify the proposition of Mr. Olcott, on behalf of the Trustees, which has been accepted by Prof. Bache, of the U. S. Coast Survey, That the Observatory, under the supervision of the Scientific Council, shall be *immediately placed in operation*, and in charge of Dr. B. A. Gould, Jr., and his assistants, *in the employ and pay of the United States Coast Survey.*

These resolutions are explicit. They declare the right of the Trustees to an undivided and entire contro-



over the property of the Observatory—the appointment of its officers, and its general policy. The appointment of the “Scientific Council” is ratified and confirmed, and their office and duties as such Council are distinctly defined—and then the arrangement which had been settled upon between Professor Bache and Mr. Olcott is adopted. This arrangement is expressly stated in the resolution. It is “that the Observatory, under the supervision of the Scientific Council, shall be immediately placed in *operation*, and in charge of Dr. B. A. Gould, Jr., and his assistants, in the employ and pay of the United States Coast Survey.”

That a copy of these resolutions was placed in the hands of the Scientific Council, is evident from the fact stated in the “Defence,” that, at a meeting of the Council, held at Philadelphia, on the 8th of February, but of which the Trustees heard nothing, they undertook to correct what they call “an accidental error or want of precision in the statement of the Trustees’ resolution.”

The “Defence” states that “the Council *understood* that this arrangement pledged the Trustees and Council mutually *for at least two years*.” Can these gentlemen be *sincere* in saying this? With the resolutions embodying in the plainest terms, the whole arrangement between the Trustees and themselves, can they be *honest* when they pretend that the parties were pledged to each other to continue the arrangement then adopted, “for at least two years.” And yet it is upon this shallow pretext alone, that these men attempt to justify or at



least excuse themselves for taking possession of the Observatory.

Under the head of "Gross and Deliberate Insults," the defenders of Dr. Gould state as follows :

"Votes of the Executive Committee were communicated to Dr. Gould, by the Secretary, on the ninth of March, showing that the Committee had actually met; but no notice was given of any action relating to the casing of the piers, and the cost of bringing the Calculating Engine into use. When Dr. Gould called upon the President, in his letter of March 10th, in reference to this matter, the Secretary of the Trustees, Dr. Armsby, replies that he "*inadvertently omitted to send*" him the resolutions relating to it: so that, *had not Dr. Gould made his appeal, the action of the Committee would not have been known to him, the piers might to this day be without essential covering, and the Calculating Machine might still be unused.* Such an omission by a Secretary might be called by a less mild term than inadvertence."

The facts are as follows : On the 9th, in the afternoon, the Secretary sent copies to Dr. Gould of certain resolutions passed at a meeting three days previous, *at which Dr. Gould was present*, but omitted accidentally two resolutions also passed at the same meeting, relative to the Calculating Machine and Pier casings. On the morning of the 10th, discovering the omission, he sent a copy of the resolutions and an explanatory note to the Director.

On the same day—whether before or subsequent to the receipt of the Secretary's letter, is unknown to the Trustees—Dr. Gould addressed a letter to the President of the Board, informing him of the omission in the Secretary's first letter. He says :

I find no mention of the votes *by which I understood myself to be authorized to incur the expenses* necessary for bringing the

Calculating Engine into use, and for casing the piers—within the estimates presented.

Please inform me if I am under misunderstanding, *for I had already begun to take steps under the supposed authority.*

In the face of this, the Council say, "*had not Dr. Gould made his appeal, THE ACTION OF THE COMMITTEE WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN KNOWN TO HIM, and the piers might have been to this day without covering, and the Calculating Machine unused.*" The affair, in itself of small account, serves to illustrate the peculiar infirmities of Dr. Gould, and to shew how ready he was, when furnishing to the Scientific Council the materials for his "Defence," to pervert the truth.

A great effort has been made in the "Defence," and elsewhere, to excite sympathy in behalf of Dr. Gould, on account of his connection with the "Olcott Meridian Circle." A bold, and, as the Trustees believe, a dishonest attempt has been made, to have credit awarded to Dr. Gould, in respect to this splendid instrument, to which he is not entitled. The circumstances under which it was constructed, and the experience which the Trustees have had of the "peculiarities" of Dr. Gould, are such, that they have thought it worth while to make some inquiries as to the extent to which the conceptions of Dr. Gould's genius have entered into the construction of this instrument.

Dr. Gould, at his own instance, but at the expense, and as the agent of the Trustees, had gone to Europe and contracted for its construction. The instrument itself was never seen by him either in the hands of the

makers or after its arrival in this country, except as it lay in its box, until after his dismissal, when he was aroused to a spasmodic effort to have it mounted. It has never been pretended that he gave any specific directions to the makers, as to any particular improvement that he, in the exercise of his genius, had conceived. So far as the Trustees are able to learn, the only directions given were, that the instrument should contain every known improvement. The Trustees, indeed, believe it to be one of the noblest instruments of its class, but they have yet to ascertain in what particular, the makers have incorporated into it "the suggestions of Dr. Gould's *genius*."

Having learned that the instrument had been examined by an experienced astronomer, Professor Brunnow, of the Ann Arbor Observatory, while yet in the hands of its makers, a letter was addressed to that gentleman inquiring what there was in the instrument which entitled Dr. Gould to any special consideration. The answer to this letter is admirable, both for its candor and the clearness of its statements. It is as follows:

SARATOGA, July 31, 1858.

*Dear Sir:* The Meridian Circle of the Dudley Observatory, or, as I should say, the Olcott Meridian Circle, (for this name has been given to the instrument in honor of its generous donor, and is engraved on the cube of the axis,) is a very excellent one, which does great honor to the skill and genius of Mr. Martins, its maker. It has all the new improvements, which were first applied in the construction of the Meridian Circle, made a few years ago for the Observatory at Ann Arbor, by the same distinguished artist. As a Transit instrument it is essentially the same instrument as the one at Ann Arbor; the only difference of

the two lies in the way in which the microscopes are fastened. Those of the Ann Arbor instrument are attached to the solid discs, which bear the Y pieces, and can be fastened to any point of them with great ease, and yet with perfect security, rendering thus a separate apparatus for the determination of the errors of the division unnecessary. The microscopes of the Olcott Circle are larger, and embedded in the stone piers in the same way as those of the large Meridian Circle of the Greenwich Observatory. Both constructions have their peculiar advantages, and I am not able to tell which of the two I like the best. The illumination of the wires of the telescope, and of those parts of the division which are visible in the microscopes by the same stationary lamps, is also similar to the arrangement of the Greenwich instrument, though Mr. Martins has added some improvements.

Nobody can deny that the Olcott Circle is an excellent instrument; nay, being the last one made by an artist, who never builds several instruments after the same plan, and always tries to make improvements, it may not be too much to say that the instrument is the very best now in existence. *But, with this exception, that the level of the Olcott Circle hangs on the same part of the pivots, which rests on the Y pieces, I have not found anything in the construction of the instrument which has not been applied before in the construction of the Ann Arbor and of the Greenwich Circle.* I, myself, should have proposed a different arrangement for moving the telescope, as the fore-arms, which are fastened to the axis near one of the Circles, in the same manner as in the Ann Arbor instrument, are not as convenient for use, owing to the greater length of the Telescope; at least so it appeared to me, when I saw the instrument during my stay at Berlin.

I have the honor to remain,

Yours, very respectfully,

THOS. W. OLCOTT, Esq.

F. BRUNNOW.

The Trustees can but think the intelligent reader of this letter will be convinced, as they are themselves, that, to say the least, Dr. Gould and his friends have greatly overvalued the suggestions of his genius which have been incorporated into this splendid instrument. It is quite too poetical to call it "The offspring of his genius."

The Council refer briefly to the act of Dr. Gould in sending a "gratuity" to the makers of the Meridian



Circle, and endeavor to explain it, by the pretence that the three hundred dollars was intended by him as a gift from himself to those gentlemen. The facts are as follows: When the balance due to Pistor & Martins on their bill was about to be remitted to them, Dr. Gould suggested, and pressed upon the President of the Board, the propriety of adding a gratuity. This was declined at the time, on the ground that an opportunity should at least be afforded to examine the instrument. Subsequently, on the 14th of June, after having, as he states, thoroughly examined the instrument, and found that there were no defects that could be made the subject of reclamation, he writes: "I believe I mentioned to you that I sent Pistor & Martins three hundred dollars, as a gratuity."

What construction could be placed upon such an announcement? If a personal matter, why announce it in an official communication, and in such a connection? The President certainly looked upon it, as any business man would, as a notice that the gratuity before applied for by Dr. Gould, and withheld by the Board for the reasons stated, had been subsequently sent, on behalf of the Board, by the Director. He, therefore, wrote a letter expressing surprise and dissatisfaction that the unauthorised gift should have been made without the consent of the Board.

A very brief allusion is made in the Defence to "the story of a gentleman from the West," as it is called, and it is disposed of in the following manner :



The story of the gentleman from the West, which is introduced by Mr. Olcott, has been traced, by the help of one of the Trustees, from its origin to its present form, and we declare that it grew out of a single misconception, exaggerated until it took its present dimensions—reminding us of that trite history of exaggeration which each one will refer to at once for himself.

The “story” was this: A gentleman from a Western state, while in Albany, visited the Observatory, and conversed with Dr. Gould, who indulged in very gross abuse of the Trustees, and in representations respecting the Observatory, such as he had made in his letters to the *Altona Journal*. This is of importance only so far as it tends to prove, that Dr. Gould was really endeavoring to injure the Institution by misrepresentation, while professing a desire to promote its interests. That the pretended explanation of the “defence” is destitute of truth, will be seen from the following letter from a well-known citizen:

*Thomas W. Olcott, Esq.:*

DEAR SIR—At your request, I would say that the statement made by you in your first communication to the Trustees of the Dudley Observatory, in regard to the visit of a “gentleman from the West,” is correct, and in accordance with the relation made to me by the gentleman himself.

Yours, truly,  
*Albany, Aug. 12th, 1858.* THE. F. HUMPHREY.

The Trustees now come to a singular and characteristic portion of the Defence, to which they desire to direct particular attention.

On the 25th of January, Dr. Gould wrote to the *German Astronomical Journal*, at Altona, a letter for publication, in which appears the following:

“Before I can receive an answer to these lines, I shall have

made my departure for Albany, where I intend to go in the middle of February.

It was my hope to begin active operations there, *only* when the means for a sure continuation, reduction and publication were in hand, but things have turned out otherwise; and partly owing to the financial revulsion, partly owing to *still worse circumstances*, things have assumed another shape, so that the welfare of the Observatory requires absolutely the beginning of operations.

The chief instrument is the magnificent Meridian Circle of Pistor and Martins, in Berlin. *Only a few weeks ago it arrived*, and lies still unpacked in the boxes.

The construction is peculiar, and in many respects new, and will soon, as I hope, be described minutely. Besides, there is a Transit instrument, from the same makers, which the Coast Survey of the United States *presented to the Observatory*. Thirdly, the Observatory possesses the Calculating or Tabulating machine of G. and E. Sheutz, of Stockholm, which is still unpacked.

Few means are now in hand for the commencement and continuation of observations, but I hope *through voluntary labor, and through the noble support of the Coast Survey, under the direction of Prof. Bache, at least to be able to do something.*"

Several points will occur to the reader in this remarkable letter. The first and most important is, that Dr. Gould immediately after his appointment as Director of the Dudley Observatory, should have thought proper to write to a foreign journal that it was a pauper institution, dependent upon his "voluntary labor" and the "noble support of the Coast Survey, under the direction of Prof. Bache." Did such representations, unfounded as they were, bear the indication of regard for the Observatory? Do they not rather appear, throughout, like an attempt to glorify the Coast Survey, at the expense of the Observatory?

It is worthy of remark, that Dr. Gould represents that the Meridian Circle had arrived "*only a few weeks*" prior to the date of his letter. It had really been at the Observatory about *three months*. At the same

time, he speaks of the instruments being "still unpacked," in a manner calculated to create the impression that *he* was not responsible for the delay.

It appears singular, too, that Dr. Gould should have omitted to allude, in this letter, to the Normal Clock, while mentioning the instruments at the Observatory. That Clock, it will be remembered, *was ordered at Altona*, where the journal in which his letter appeared, is published. It was, according to Dr. Gould's account, a most wonderful and elaborate piece of workmanship. It had never been received. What more natural, if the clock was ever ordered, than to make some allusion to it, and some enquiries as to its progress, in a letter addressed to the very place where its maker resides?

At a subsequent date, Dr. Gould wrote another letter of a yet more offensive character to the Altona Journal, which has before been noticed.

These letters have been denounced by the Trustees as evincing a spirit hostile to the interests of the institution. They were written to a foreign journal, unlikely to meet the eye of the Trustees, and could have but one object in view; to misrepresent the condition of the Observatory. The Trustees believe this charge is fully sustained by the letters themselves, and they ask the reader to mark how they are met by the defence. The Council say, "The matter of Dr. Gould's Letter to the Astronomical Journal of Altona, *is a perfectly simple one.*" They then proceed—not to defend those letters from the charge of slandering and injuring the Observatory—

but to recapitulate the services which Dr. Gould and his assistants render to the Government and to the Observatory; the compensation they receive; the quality of the labor they perform; the "devotion" of his assistants to Dr. Gould; and the "high respect and regard" which the Council entertain for these assistants.

The quotation given *contains every word that is said about the offensive letters of Dr. Gould.* And yet in the "Summing up" the following "conclusion" is stated:

The matter of the letter to the *Astronomical Journal*, of Altona, is shown to be a perfectly simple one, *and to have in it not the first element of a charge against Dr. Gould.*

The reader can draw his own inferences from the remarkable course of "Defence" pursued by the Council.

The charge that Dr. Gould's relations with the eminent astronomers of the day are such as to preclude the hope of any concert of action with them, is so characteristically met by the Defence, that we give entire their argument and conclusion. They say:

Recurring to the idea of the national character of the Dudley Observatory, Mr. Olcott declares that the personal relations of Dr. Gould with Mitchell, with Maury, with the Bonds, and with Brunnnow, are such as to preclude the hope of concert and co-operation with them. How utterly this is unwarranted by the facts, is shown by the pages of the *Astronomical Journal*, edited by Dr. Gould, and which contain constant contributions from the Bonds, Maury and Brunnnow! The number just passing through the press contains a leading article from the last named astronomer.

And again they declare the following to be the "result" derived from the above:

We give the reasons *disproving the charge* that prominent astronomers cannot co-operate in matters of science with Dr. Gould.



Of course the Trustees have never supposed that the relations of the parties named, to each other, was such that the astronomers referred to, could not write articles for the only Astronomical Journal at present published in the country, simply because Dr. Gould happens to be its editor. But only by such an evasion can the Council hope to deceive the reader of their "Defence," into a belief that Dr. Gould is upon terms of friendly relationship with the great astronomers of the country.

The unworthy and dishonorable deception here practised by the Council will justify the Trustees in stating the facts. The authors of this "Defence" have not the poor excuse even of imagining that the feelings of the gentlemen they have named in their paragraph are friendly towards Dr. Gould. They put forth their pretence, in fact, in the face of *knowledge* to the contrary. They have not even been left in doubt.

Prior to the publication of the "Defence," a letter was addressed by Dr. Gould to Prof. Brunnnow, the only gentleman named in the "Defence," to whom he would presume to address such a request, asking a letter from that pure minded and gifted man, approving his course at the Observatory, and refuting the assertion made originally by Mr. Olcott. The following is Prof. Brunnnow's reply, a copy of which was given to the Trustees by Dr. Peters, with permission to make it public.



ANN ARBOR, July 1, 1858.

DEAR GOULD—Yesterday I received some New-York Times, from which I learnt the present state of affairs at the Dudley Observatory, and Sunday came your note, together with the papers, in which Mr. Olcott's remarks about you are published. You will recollect that I frankly confessed to you that I did not approve at all of the manner in which Dr. Peters had been treated by you and your friends, and I expressed myself so continually in my correspondence with Peters. Very likely the Trustees heard, through him, of the side I have taken on this question, and mistook my *strong disapproval* of your course in this affair, as *a rupture of all intercourse* between us; *as it exists between you and Bond and Maury*. This, I suppose, is the origin of the remarks to which you refer.

I feel sorry for you individually, but I must say *that you brought on all this difficulty by your own imprudence*, and by your treatment of Dr. Peters; and I must *entirely condemn* your course in this affair.

I also regret that this has chilled the friendly feelings I had towards you since our first acquaintance.

Yours,

BRUNNOW.

With this letter before them, the Council wrote and published to the world the above statement!

It may be asked, why do such unfriendly relations exist between the distinguished gentlemen named, and Dr. Gould? The reason will at once suggest itself to the minds of those who have a personal acquaintance with the late Director. Those who have become familiar with the mental habitudes of Dr. Gould, are quite aware that it is very common for him to speak in terms of disparagement and depreciation, of the achievements of other scientific men. The Trustees, did they think it proper to resort to the weapons in their own hands, could easily show that American astronomers are entirely justifiable in withholding from him their friendship and co-operation. But in this statement, the Trustees have thought fit to confine themselves to

matters relating directly to the Dudley Observatory, and have availed themselves only of such letters as are strictly of an official character, carefully abstaining from all reference to such as might by any possibility, be regarded as confidential.

The Council occupy three pages in a professed description of work done at the Observatory since January last. The object is to persuade the inexperienced reader into the belief that some important astronomical observations have really been made by Dr. Gould and his assistants. The Trustees are assured by competent astronomers that this claim is entirely baseless and ridiculous. To them, the statement of the Council carries its own refutation. The following are extracts from a review of this portion of the Defence, prepared by Dr. Peters, the Professor of Astronomy, at Hamilton Observatory:

OBSERVATORY OF HAMILTON COLLEGE.

Clinton, 1858, August 7.

THOMAS W. OLCOTT, ESQ.,

*President of the Board of Trustees, Dudley Observatory.*

DEAR SIR: As requested by your letter of 2d inst., I have examined the scientific value of what has been set forth by the members of the late Scientific Council in their pamphlet, entitled "Defence of Dr. Gould," as the results of work done at the Dudley Observatory since this was placed in charge of Dr. Gould and his assistants of the U. S. Coast Survey.

The results are summed up, on page 89, as consisting "of more than one thousand observations of magnitudes of stars," "of observations for time, for longitude and others," "the magnetic constants," and they are fully, though confusedly, commented upon in art. 32, on pages 78-81.

1. *The more than one thousand observations of magnitudes of stars.*—You are aware that the fixed stars, with respect to their brightness, are divided into classes or *magnitudes*, the brightest being called of the first, and the dimmest, just visible to the naked eye, of the sixth or seventh magnitude (varying a little with the sharp-sightedness of different persons). The distinguished astronomer of Bonn, Professor Argelander, has given the best celestial maps, in which, with parti-

cular attention to magnitudes, the stars from the first to the sixth class are laid down. It seems that the young assistants of the Dudley Observatory, in making themselves acquainted with the configurations of the stars—those maps in hand—compared them with the heavens, and noted especially whether the brightness or the magnitudes, as given by Argelander, were right or not, or, as it is expressed in terms less easily understood by the general public, they made “an elaborate and valuable series of photometric observations” (page 78). Certain stars are periodically changing in brightness, appearing sometimes of a higher, sometimes of a lower class, and therefore are called *variable* stars. Their brightness usually is estimated by comparison with some neighboring star, and the date and time noted. In forty nights available since March 10, we learn the “astronomers” of the Dudley Observatory made in all about one thousand observations of magnitudes (comprising two hundred and eleven upon variable stars), that is, on the average, twenty-five in one night. Whether there be reason to “pronounce this a remarkable amount of work for the time and number of persons employed” (page 80), every one will easily judge for himself, considering wherein, as I stated, the very simple process of observing magnitudes consists, and bearing in mind that the term *magnitude* here does not mean the real size, but only the relative brightness. \* \* \* \* \*

2. *Observations for time.* Since time is an element auxiliary for other purposes, only of a temporary value, alike the correction of any instrument, and since regulating a clock is not in itself a contribution to science, I do not see how the observations for time have been mentioned and slipped in among those “already made” (page 89), unless for filling up the meager list of work done. The expression “observations already made” conveys the idea of something durable for science; the knowledge of the accidental error and rate of the clock has no claim upon such an honor. Besides, I may be permitted to state, that observations for time have been made at the Dudley Observatory already since July, 1856.

3. *Observations for longitude.* The determination of the longitude of the Dudley Observatory was committed for the sum of \$600 to the Superintendent of the U. S. Coast Survey, and therefore cannot with propriety be claimed as a work performed by the Observatory, even by insisting upon the cameleontic relation to Observatory and Coast Survey of Professors Bache and Gould. It shows only one instance more of the injustice customary under the system governing the Coast Survey, when Professor Bache, for extolling Dr. Gould, says, page 80: “assistance was had from the field parties of the Coast Survey,” without naming the able C. S. assistants, Messrs. Dean and Goodfellow, by whom the work was done.

On page 80 we read: “In the exchanges of telegraphic signals for longitude, 210 sets of observations have been made for instrumental corrections, 23 for personal equations, 189 for longitude, 169 exchanged with New-York, and 47 for thread-intervals.” This bill (produced clearly for the purpose of making show of great figures with the public) is considerably reduced when nearer examined. For example, the 169 sets exchanged with New-York are evidently comprised among the 189 for longitude. Though the mode of arrangement used in the Coast Survey seems different, the observations always and o great advantage may be arranged so as to make the sets for instrumental corrections equally available for longitude signals, and if the

"210 sets" are complete transits over all the wires, and not single wires, each set in the same time is a contribution to the determination of "thread-intervals."

There is a contradiction in the statements made in regard to the determination of longitude. On page 78 is stated: "the difference of longitude of the Observatory from New-York *has been determined*;" but on page 69, at the close of a chapter on "Knickerbocker literature," the longitude operations are said to be "*still in progress*." On page 80 is said: "The latter branch of the subject (thread-intervals) is still in progress." Allow me, dear Sir, on this occasion a few words about the whole affair of the longitude determination of the Dudley Observatory. The Observatory has since October, 1856, the magnificent 8 foot Transit, for the mounting of which everything was prepared in spring 1857. Nothing was easier than to mount this instrument, and nothing was more natural than to use the same in determining the longitude, the more so when in September of the same year Professor Bond kindly offered for the longitude the co-operation of the Cambridge Observatory. This offer, orally made to me, I communicated immediately to Dr. Gould, but it was by him instantly and desponsingly refused. Thus the advantages of observing with large instruments on both end-stations, and of connecting the Dudley Observatory directly with the Harvard College Observatory, which by voyages of many hundreds of Chronometers between Cambridge and Liverpool has become indeed the fundamental point for all longitudes in this country, have been lost. A Coast Survey station in New-York and small Transportable Transit Instruments have been substituted; the large Transit remaining in its boxes. Will the members of the late Scientific Council assert, that "this is one of those instances of happy adaptation of ends to means that mark talent among practical men" (page 78)? The cost for the longitude determination was estimated to about \$100, or at the utmost to \$150. To make such an estimate, which is wholly confirmed by certificates from what the work actually has cost in other places, was considered by Professor Bache, in January, a delinquency. The Superintendent of the Coast Survey offered to do the work for \$600, and thus the Observatory fund, in this item alone, has sustained a direct loss of at least \$450, by the counsel of those same men, who lately came to Albany, (see page 4 of their pamphlet,) "as men having a solemn duty to discharge towards the community, *anxious to prevent the dissipation of a noble bequest*, anxious to avert the disgrace to the city of Albany," etc. We may well ask again in their own language: "is this one of those instances of happy adaptation of ends to means [or of means to ends] that mark talent among practical men?"

Making observations for time; determining latitudes and longitudes, are of those elementary operations in practical astronomy, which the higher branches of surveying borrow for their uses. Hence it comes, that astronomers consider determining longitudes a rather easy work, and do it in much less time than surveyors. Greenwich and Cambridge, for example, the two great English observatories, determined their difference in longitude in *two* nights with the greatest precision; so also, Berlin and Frankfort, Cambridge in Massachusetts, and Fredericton in New Brunswick; and Greenwich and Paris, Greenwich and Brussels, Berlin and Konigsberg, and many other observatories have been determined in a few nights within the tenth of the second. If, as Dr. Gould has stated, it would cost from \$200 to \$300 to determine the longitude with the precision of one second of



time, and if, as the Members of the late Scientific Council have stated, the cost increases "in more than a cubic ratio with the precision,"—then the precision of one tenth of a second would imply an expenditure of three hundred thousand dollars,—which is simply absurd.

That the U. S. Coast Survey cannot determine longitudes with the same facility as astronomers, is natural; but that after two or three months the longitude of the Dudley Observatory is still laboring under the determination of "thread-intervals," is really astonishing, and does not "mark talent among practical men."

4. *Other Observations.* These are explained on page 80, as follows: "All the occultations have been observed which have been visible with the comet-seeker, and new discoveries of celestial bodies verified." The number of occultations observed has not been given, and from experience I presume it not to amount to half a dozen. The high sounding assertion, that "new discoveries of celestial bodies have been) *verified*" is of course condemning itself; the discoverers of the different Comets, which have appeared in the first half of the present year, will not feel more certain of the reality of their discoveries, nor science has gained anything, by the simple assurance that the young men have been gazing through the comet-seeker at the Dudley Observatory.

5. *The magnetic constants of the Observatory.* We need only to look into the volumes of the Coast Survey Reports, where series of hundreds of magnetic observations, made by the skill and assiduity of Messrs. Chas. A. Schott and J. E. Hilgard, are published, in order to conceive of how little consequence the knowledge of the magnetic constants for any *single* place must be held. It is, however, a contribution, but one owed to the "field party," and not to Dr. Gould. Besides, the magnetic constants of the Observatory have been determined twice before, in August, 1856, by an Austrian, and in December, 1857, by a French traveller.

You will see from the preceding analysis of the art. 32 of the pamphlet, that in regard to the scientific value of the work done by those in charge of the Dudley Observatory, from January to June of the present year, I have come to a conclusion directly opposite to that of the Members of the late Scientific Council, who in their enthusiasm exclaim the very simple observations upon magnitudes of stars as "sufficient to stamp with approval the unfolding glories of the Observatory," (page 80.) I believe the gentlemen deceive themselves in assuming judgment on astronomical matters,—none of them being astronomers.

I remain with great esteem,

Very respectfully yours,

C. H. F. PETERS.

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The Trustees have thus presented what they believe to be a fair and truthful history of their connection with the *four* gentlemen who are now in possession of the Dudley Observatory. They have endeavored to set forth, with a strict regard to their truthfulness, all



the facts bearing upon this painful controversy. Much that has been said, they would gladly have omitted, were they not persuaded that justice, both to themselves and those with whom they are forced to contend, required that it *should* be said.

The Trustees claim to have been actuated throughout by a sincere desire to sustain and advance the interests of the Observatory. Most of them have been identified with it from its first conception. To its management, they have given, faithfully and conscientiously, their best faculties. Some of them have made large contributions to its endowment. Some, too, have given to its interests, what was worth more than money, a large portion of their time, withdrawn from other pursuits at very considerable sacrifice. None of them have any personal wishes to gratify, or any personal interests to be subserved in this controversy, beyond the welfare of the Institution.

When it was ascertained that Professor Mitchell could not, at once, take charge of the Observatory, as had originally been contemplated, the Trustees felt themselves exceedingly fortunate in being able to procure the services of such a man as they were led to believe Dr. Gould to be, to take charge of it and carry it forward to a successful completion. They felt, too, that they had gained much for their young enterprise, when they were able to connect with it the names of Bache, Henry and Pierce. They entered into this new arrangement with the most exalted hopes, and extended to

their new associates and advisers their most unrestricted confidence. Those hopes have been disappointed, and that confidence has misled them.

That they have greatly erred, the Trustees painfully realize. But for this they claim that they are entitled to be judged with some indulgence. Though it has been disastrous to the Observatory, and but for their own timely interposition, might have proved fatal, the error was the result of too great reliance upon men whom all the world were ready to honor. They surrendered, too implicitly, their own judgment, to the control of one who, whatever merits he may possess, has been found totally unfit for the duties connected with the organization of an institution like the Dudley Observatory.

Nor are the Trustees disposed to deny, that they are chargeable with a second error, as great perhaps, and less excusable than the first. After they had become satisfied that, whatever the talents or attainments of Dr. Gould, he was utterly unsuited to the position he had occupied, under the appointment of the Trustees, and had resolved upon an entire change in their arrangements, dispensing altogether with his services, so controlling was the influence, and so plausible the inducements of the Scientific Council, that the Trustees were again persuaded, contrary to the convictions of their own previous judgment, to restore Dr. Gould, and again put him in charge of the Observatory. What

they were then led to expect, and how those expectations have been disappointed, has already been seen.

It required but a short period to demonstrate the sad error into which they had thus been led. Having determined that they could not, with fidelity to their trust, longer remain inactive, the Trustees, in respectful but decisive terms, informed the Scientific Council, for whom their respect was still unabated, that some change in the management of the affairs of the Observatory was necessary. They could not allow themselves to doubt, after what had already occurred, that such men would at once, advise Dr. Gould, whatever they might deem to be the cause of dissatisfaction, to retire from his position, and, if they chose to be further connected with the Observatory, suggest some suitable person to succeed him. The only desire of the Trustees was, to relieve the Observatory from his charge. This they desired to do with the least possible injury to the reputation or feelings of Dr. Gould. Had he then withdrawn, whatever he or his friends might have seen fit to say would probably have been borne in silence.

What followed is now well known. The surprise of the Trustees can scarcely be conceived, when they found, that, instead of yielding to what seemed to be the necessity of the case, Dr. Gould and his three friends were all "*bristling for a fight.*" The Trustees have been set at defiance. These men, relying upon their great name as a protection, have moved forward, regardless of law or right, to the execution of their

purpose, with a resoluteness which would better become the *desperado* or the assassin, than men occupying their position in the scientific world. A sentinel now walks upon his post at the gate of the Observatory, to repel any intrusion from its legal proprietors.

It is among the most remarkable features of this controversy, and to the Trustees, as painful as surprising, that a portion of their fellow-citizens, who had hitherto withheld from this Institution their countenance and support, should now be found ready to aid and encourage, by their influence and their contributions, in the perpetration of such an unequalled outrage. To be able thus to wield, at their will, such influences, to suit their own purposes, however dishonorable, is not among the smallest achievements of these men of science.

There is a single other circumstance to which the Trustees, before taking leave of the subject, think proper to allude. They are glad to avail themselves of this opportunity, publicly to express their gratitude to those gentlemen, not in Albany alone, but in different places remote from that City, who have so magnanimously, in former days, contributed to the endowment of the Observatory. It is a source of unceasing regret to the Trustees, that by employing a man to take charge of this noble enterprise, who has proved unsuited to the position, any part of these gratuities should have failed to contribute to the great end for which they were designed. But, in the midst of these regrets, it is

gratifying to be able to assure their patrons that the evil has been discovered in season to save the Observatory; and having "learned wisdom by the things they have suffered," the Trustees pledge themselves that no more "wasteful expenditures" will be allowed.

The Trustees have received from a portion of these donors, a request that they would consent to refer the difficulties in which they are involved, to the arbitrament of disinterested men. Such a request, emanating from such a source, is entitled to a respectful consideration. This it has received. They feel great confidence in expressing their conviction that had the real friends of the Observatory who have united in this request been acquainted with the facts, as they are now disclosed, they would have taken a very different view of the question. In considering, as it became them to do, whether a compliance with such a request were practicable as well as expedient, the question naturally arose, what was to be referred to such arbitrament and what should be the terms of the arbitration. The answer to such an inquiry naturally suggests that such a reference is neither practicable nor expedient. The single question between the Scientific Council and the Trustees is, whether or not Dr. Gould shall continue to have the control of the Observatory. The very statement of the question shews that it is not a fit subject of reference. It is equivalent to a submission of the question whether the Trustees shall abandon the Observatory and surrender their trust altogether.



In conclusion, the Trustees say to their patrons and friends, that though wearied and pained with a controversy conducted with such desperateness, and in which their antagonists are able to command such a variety of resources, they are not discouraged. Their confidence is unshaken. They believe that truth and right will yet prevail; and that the Observatory, the object of so much effort and sacrifice, will yet emerge from the thick cloud in which it is now enveloped, into a clear sky, and, as they hope and expect, under the guidance of its first scientific patron, move on to the accomplishment of a brilliant destiny.

THO'S W. OLCOTT,  
 IRA HARRIS,  
 ROB'T H. PRUYN,  
 WM. H. DE WITT,  
 JNO. F. RATHBONE,  
 JAS. H. ARMSBY,  
 SAM'L H. RANSOM,  
 ALDEN MARCH,  
 ISAAC W. VOSBURGH.

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NOTE.—It is deemed proper to add, that the duty of preparing this statement was originally assigned to Mr. Wilder, who was eminently fitted for such a service. He was engaged in the work up to the very hour of his death. That afflictive event cast upon others, who had less leisure at their command, the labor of completing what he had begun. This circumstance will account for the delay that has occurred.

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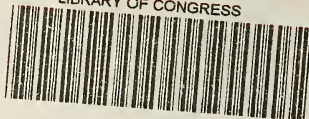








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